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GREAT RELIGIONS

ALFRED W. MARTIN

THE WORLD'S GREAT RELIGIONS

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THE WORLD'S GREAT RELIGIONS

AND

THE RELIGION OF THE FUTURE

BY

ALFRED W. MARTIN, A.M., S.T.B.

AUTHOR OF "THE DAWN OF CHRISTIANITY," "FAITH IN A FUTURE LIFE," "PSYCHIC TENDENCIES OF TO-DAY"

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PREFATORY NOTE

This book is based upon a series of addresses on "The World's Great Religions," delivered, without notes, on successive Sunday evenings in the winter of 1921 at the Meetinghouse of the Society for Ethical Culture of New York. Several hundred signed requests for their publication were received by the author, but because of the pressure of imperative duties only those addresses included in the *Semitic* group were written out and are here reproduced as nearly as possible in their original form, together with the introductory and closing lectures of the series. What has been here essayed is a presentation, not only of what the great Semitic religions stand for, but also, and more especially, of their *distinctive* features. That which differentiates each from all the rest is summed up in the sentence printed under each chapter-title.

The reader is respectfully requested to remember that while the author is identified with the Society for Ethical Culture, this organization is not to be regarded as in any way sponsor for his views. A cardinal characteristic of the Society for Ethical Culture is the freedom of its fellowship. It accords to its platform lec-

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turers entire freedom of speech and its members are equally free to accept or reject the views of the speaker. He has no right to speak for any one but himself and it is therefore hoped that these addresses will be read in the light of this fundamental freedom of the Ethical fellowship.

New York

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SCRIPTURE SELECTIONS

(Ancient and Modern)

(Introductory to Chapter I)

He is my beloved who is free from intolerance, who is impartial, patient, just.

Heaven is a palace with many doors and each may enter in his own way.—*Hindu.*

Seest thou two or three imbeciles who hold the world between their two hands, and who in their ignorance believe themselves the wisest of the universe? Be not disturbed that they regard all as heretics who are not simpletons.

Broad is the carpet God has spread, and beautiful the colors he has given it.

Whatever road I take joins the highway that leads to Thee.—*Zoroastrian.*

The man who is tolerant with the intolerant, him I call a wise man.

The root of religion is to reverence one's own faith and never revile that of others.

He who is beloved of God honors every form of faith.—*Buddhist.*

Whatever be thy religion, associate with men who think differently from thee.

If thou canst mix with them freely and art not angered at hearing them, thou hast attained peace and art a master of creation.—*Mohammedan.*

Who gains wisdom? He who is willing to receive instruction from all sources.—*Jewish.*

Who art thou that judgest another man's servant?
To his own master he standeth or falleth.
Why then dost thou judge thy brother, or why dost thou set at naught thy brother?
Let us not judge one another any more, but rather take heed that we put no stumbling block in another's way.
Judge not that ye be not judged.
Judge nothing prematurely, but wait.—*Christian.*

To say that this, that, or the other precept of the New Testament cannot be paralleled in the sacred books of the non-Christian religions only proves how narrowly one has read.—*Emerson.*

There is not a single noble sentiment or lofty aspiration in the New Testament that cannot be matched in one or another of the older Scriptures of the World.—*John W. Chadwick.*

Revelation is not sealed;
Answering unto man's endeavor,
Truth and Right are still revealed.
That which came to ancient sages,
Greek, Barbarian, Roman, Jew,
Written in the heart's deep pages,
Shines to-day, forever, new.—*S. Longfellow.*

THE WORLD'S GREAT RELIGIONS

CHAPTER I

THE BIBLES OF THE WORLD'S GREAT RELIGIONS

Four great discoveries of the modern world have left their mark upon religious thought and compelled the reconstruction of many an old-time belief. The discoveries themselves were more or less promptly acknowledged, but their bearing upon inherited religious ideas was only gradually perceived. Indeed, it is no exaggeration to say that even to-day the great majority of those familiar with the discoveries are utterly unaware of any resulting influence upon religion. Only a very small percentage of the educated people of the world realize that such an influence has been exerted upon religious thought. Concerning the change in religious thinking which these discoveries have compelled, the great majority of people are like passengers on board a transatlantic liner.

Some are sleeping in their berths, others are lounging on the saloon sofas, still others are chatting idly on the deck, yet all alike are unconscious of the mighty sweep the ship has made in changing her course. But when at length they awake to what has happened they find that the old headlands have disappeared and that new constellations are shining out of unfamiliar skies.

First in chronological order was the discovery of Copernicus, published in 1543, disposing of the ancient notion that the world is a three-story structure and the earth the center of the solar system. The great Polish discoverer revealed the fact that the earth is a mere suburb of the cosmos and the cosmos itself practically infinite. This discovery required a reconstruction of the traditional conceptions of God, prayer, heaven and hell.

Next came the discovery, in 1787, of the oldest portion of what is perhaps the oldest of the sacred books of the East, calling for a radical change in certain ideas that had been entertained concerning the Bible and also as to the place which Christianity had been thought to hold among the world's great religions.

In 1841 Sir Charles Lyell visited Niagara

Falls and from a careful survey of the cañon of the Niagara River discovered that the earth was not less than 300,000 years old and that the process of creation was by no means "finished." This discovery struck a fatal blow at the long-established belief that the antiquity of the earth dated from 4000 B. C. and also at the Genesis conception of creation as having been *completed* in six days.

In 1859 there appeared Charles Darwin's *Origin of Species,* revolutionizing the traditional idea of the nature and antecedents of man. Indeed, so revolutionizing was this discovery that it undermined the foundation upon which the Christian system of redemption had been reared—the fall of man. For this discovery made it apparent that man is not "lost" and therefore he does not need to be "saved." Rather is man ignorant and so needs to be educated—in brain, in heart, in will. Man, moreover, is brutish and hence needs to be refined, "working out the beast" and letting the "ape and tiger," that still survive in his moral make-up, "die." Darwin's discovery brought into the world the inspiring conviction that 'tis better to be halfway up the ladder of progress, than down at the bottom, believing you have

tumbled from the top; better to be ashamed of your ancestors, than to have your ancestors ashamed of you.

Our concern in this introductory address is with the second of these four great discoveries.

When the most ancient of the sacred scriptures of India—the *Rig-Veda*—was brought to light and the profoundly spiritual character of its message made known to the western world, a great forward movement began, away from persecution and mere forbearance toward tolerance and appreciative understanding of other than the Christian and Jewish faiths. Nay, more, this forward movement was considerably accelerated when the Bibles of Arabia, China and Persia were discovered and translated into the chief languages of Europe. And at this point we have to acknowledge our indebtedness to the labors of that coryphæus in the science of comparative religion—the late F. Max Müller, editor of the *Sacred Books of the East.* When this monumental work appeared it was as though some long-lost musical score had been unearthed, the which, when sympathetically studied, proved to be a veritable symphony of religions, empowered to lift a world-audience

into the serene and exalting atmosphere of a universal spiritual fellowship.

Time was, when, in Christian civilization, persecution seemed ethically warranted. Ecclesiastical authorities, assuming that they alone had the true religion, believed it was God's will that they should suppress dissenters and so vindicate and spread "God's truth." If persuasion failed, they resorted to imprisonment. When that proved ineffectual, they tried the lash. As a final measure they condemned the dissenters to the stake, hoping by fire to exterminate both heresy and heretics. Nor are the traces of such persecution entirely extinct. Today the Christian persecutes the Jew and the Jew the Christian. Romanism persecutes Protestantism, Orthodox Protestantism persecutes liberal Christianity, and liberal Christianity persecutes the religion that is no longer Christian.

A step upward in the direction of the ideal attitude was taken when forbearance replaced persecution, when latitude was admitted in theology no less than in geography, when dissenters were reluctantly allowed to hold their heresies without fear of molestation or threat.

And when tolerance was substituted for forbearance, it meant that a new attitude toward dissenters was taken, because tolerance is the *willing* consent to let others hold opinions different from one's own, whereas forbearance is the *unwilling* consent to let others entertain views differing from one's own. Yet even this attitude, noble as it is, cannot be regarded as the acme of spiritual attainment. For tolerance always implies a measure of concession. We tolerate what we must, but would suppress if we could. Tolerance has an air of patronizing condescension about it. He who tolerates affects a certain offensive superiority, exhibits spiritual conceit. Yet in the estimation of many a thoughtful person tolerance is looked upon as the very zenith of spiritual attainment, the *ne plus ultra* of considerateness, the loveliest flower on the rosebush of liberalism. What more, it is asked, can there be expected of us than a friendly, tolerant attitude to beliefs and systems with which we are not in sympathy? Our answer is, you can *appreciate* them, be sincerely eager to do full justice to them, generously assume that they have something of worth which may enrich your own thought of life, all the while remembering that if the belief or sys-

tem contain error, it is kept alive only by reason of the truth-germ which it hides. Lovelier by far than tolerance is appreciation which, while wholly free from the blemish that mars the beauty of tolerance, adds to that beauty fresh graces all its own. Appreciation is the spirit which exceeds tolerance, despises mere forbearance, blushes at persecution. Toward the various Bibles and religious systems of the world it takes a sympathetic, catholic, eclectic attitude, seeking to estimate each religion from the dynamic rather than from the static viewpoint, i.e., judging each, not only by what it originally was, but also by what it has grown to be. The spirit of appreciation is such that it looks upon all the religions as comparable to the stops and pedals of a great organ, each contributing its particular tone to the harmony of human aspiration and faith; some accentuating the essential, others the ornamental, notes; none, of itself, producing the full-orbed music, but the harmonious blending of these individual melodies resulting in a symphony of allegiance to the good, the beautiful and the true.

In 711, when the Moors crossed over from northern Africa into Spain, they brought with them a certain book which they designated "The

Word of God," and for which these Moslems made a most astounding claim. They declared that if every single copy were to be destroyed it would entail no permanent loss because there is an everlasting Copy by the throne of the Most High "Allah," who, by relays of angels, could re-reveal it at any time! This "Word of God," as it was called, proved to be the Koran, the sacred book of the Mohammedans.

About the middle of the fourteenth century certain travelers from Central Europe found their way to a rich and thickly populated country which Marco Polo had called "Cathay," but which subsequently was known as China. On their return to Germany they reported upon the remarkable literary discoveries they had made. They told more particularly of books replete with rules and regulations for the conduct of life, personal, social, vocational—a vast ethical literature which proved to be none other than the sacred books of the Confucians. Unlike the Koran these books owed their authority not to any divine inspiration, but to their antiquity and to the reputed virtues of their authors. As in the case of the Koran these Confucian texts were ultimately translated into the leading languages of Europe.

In 1754, Anquetil du Parron, a young Parisian student of oriental literature, while browsing in the royal library of Paris, came upon a pile of dusty fragments of manuscripts written in an unfamiliar Sanskrit dialect. On closer inspection and study this was found to be "Pahlevi" and the literature, a portion of the "Avesta," the sacred book of the Zoroastrians. Wishing to extend his knowledge of this Bible, he took ship for the Zoroastrian colony in Bombay, and at the end of three years Anquetil learned their language and came into possession of one hundred and eighty-two sheets similar to the fragments discovered in the Paris library. The combined Bombay and Parisian finds constitute all that we have to-day of the sacred books of the Zoroastrians.

In 1787, when the British occupancy of India was inaugurated, that great commercial enterprise led to the discovery of the oldest part of what is probably the oldest Bible in the world, the "Rig-Veda," consisting of 1020 hymns in praise of the personified forces and phenomena of Nature. This is regarded by orthodox Hindus as a holy, inspired revelation. In other words, it is not the work of any man, nor created in time and space, but divinely revealed in

a remote antiquity to semi-divine seers called "Rishis." Through them the Veda was made known to mankind. Add to this Rig-Veda the other three Vedas, which were subsequently discovered, and to these, the "Aranyakas," or Forest Meditations, and to these, again, the "Upanishads" or ethico-philosophical sayings, add also the two great religious epics, the "Mahabharata" and the "Ramayana," and the whole constitutes a grand total of sacred Hindu literature over four times as large as the Christian Bible.

A few years later other Indian sacred books were discovered, the "Pitakas," the Bible of the Buddhists. Following the rise of a doctrine of plenary inspiration, the letters of the three Pitakas were counted, as were those of the New Testament in the days when men believed that even its letters were of divine origin. A numerical comparison shows that there are about eight times as many letters in the Pitakas as there are in the New Testament.

The direct and immediate effect of the discovery of these sacred books was the creation of a new science, commonly known as the science of "Comparative Religion." Though only in its childhood, this science has produced a

succession of significant results. Let us note the more important of them.

Ten Results of the Science of Comparative Religion

1. Moral precepts relating to justice, temperance, truthfulness, patience, love, etc., far from being the peculiar property of any one religion, were found inculcated in the Bibles of all religions.

Take, for example, the moral sentiment of catholicity, as it has found expression in the Bibles of the seven great religions of the world. In the Hindu Bible we read: "Altar flowers are of many species, but all worship is one. Systems of faith differ, but God is One. The object of all religions is alike: all seek the object of their love, and all the world is love's dwelling-place."

The corresponding passage from the Buddhist Bible reads: "The root of religion is to reverence one's own faith and never to revile the faith of others. My doctrine makes no distinction between high and low, rich and poor. It is like the sky; it has room for all, and like water it washes all alike."

And this noble sentence has its equivalent in

the Zoroastrian Bible: "Have the religions of mankind no common ground? Is there not everywhere the same enrapturing beauty? Broad, indeed, is the carpet which God has spread, and many are the colors which He has given it. Whatever road I take joins the highway that leads to Thee."

The selfsame sentiment appears in the Confucian Bible: "Religions are many and different, but reason is one. The broad-minded see the truth in different religions; the narrow-minded see only the differences."

In the Jewish scriptures it is written: "Wisdom, in all ages entering into holy souls, maketh them friends of God and Prophets. Behold how good and pleasant a thing it is for brethren to dwell together in unity."

Finally, in the Christian scriptures we read: "Are we not all children of one Father? Hath not one God created us?"

2. Spiritual sentiments, such as awe, reverence, wonder, aspiration, worship, far from being peculiar to any one religion, were met with in all the various systems of faith.

For example, let us select the religious sentiment of hope, the trust that man's spiritual self does not end with his physical self, that in some

form eternality awaits the essential selfhood of every child of man. In the Hindu Bible is the command: "Go, give to the plants and to the waters thy body which belongs to them; but there is an immortal portion of thee, transport it to the world of the holy."

In the Zoroastrian "Avesta" are these sentences: "At the last day questions will be asked only as to what you have done, not from whom you are descended. I fear not death; I fear only not having lived well enough."

From the Pitakas of the Buddhists we have: "The soul is myself; the body is only my dwelling-place."

The Confucian Bible declares: "Man never dies. It is because men see only their bodies that they hate death."

In the Mohammedan scripture we find this passage: "Mortals ask, 'What property has a man left behind him?' but angels ask, 'What good deeds has he sent on before him?' "

In the Jewish Apocrypha we read: "The memorial of virtue is immortal. When it is present men take example of it, and when it is gone they desire it."

Finally, the Christian scriptures contain the familiar words: "Though our outward man

perish, yet is our inward man day by day renewed."

3. Differences in climate, environment, and racial origin, it is now known, have produced varying expressions of one and the same spiritual sentiment; so that whether it be the Aztec, intoning before his crudely painted image; or the New Zealander, squatting in dumb meditation before his feathered god; or whether it be the Mohammedan, prostrate in front of his mosque; or the Christian, kneeling in penitential prayer to his Father in heaven; or whether it be the cosmic theist communing in silence with "the Infinite and Eternal Energy"—it is one and the same hunger and yearning for closer approximation to a recognized standard of life that is expressed by all.

4. The Ten Commandments of the Old Testament are to be found, for the most part, in many another scripture besides. Nay, more, we ought to add four other commandments to the familiar ten, to make the collection more complete. For, in the Mohammedan Bible, there is a commandment concerning cleanliness, and a commandment on humaneness, or kindness to animals, both of which ought to find a place in a group of commandments for the conduct of daily life.

And in the Hindu Bible is a commandment relating to intellectual honesty—one of the crying needs of our time, the virtue more in demand to-day, in the religious world, than any other. In the Confucian scriptures, too, the duty of utter white-mindedness, or religious sincerity, is commanded. In the Buddhist Bible, the fifth commandment reads: "Thou shalt drink no intoxicating liquor." Advocates of prohibition are emphatic in their insistence that this command should have a place in any complete compendium of moral obligation.

5. The Golden Rule did not originate with Jesus, nor with Confucius, but antedates even the latter by centuries. And the two Golden Rules are substantially the same, as appears from the use of the word "reciprocity" by Confucius to convey the idea of acting toward thy neighbor as if thou wert he. Nay, more, in the Bible of each of the seven extant great religions such a Golden Rule is to be found. Let us read the seven versions of the Golden Rule:

The Hindu: The true rule is to guard and do by the things of others as you do by your own.

The Buddhist: One should seek for others the happiness one desires for oneself.

The Zoroastrian: Do as you would be done by.

The Confucian: What you do not wish done to yourself, do not unto others.

The Mohammedan: Let none of you treat your brother in a way he himself would dislike to be treated.

The Jewish: Whatsoever you do not wish your neighbor to do to you, do not unto him.

The Christian: All things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them.

6. The old notion that there are moral precepts in the New Testament not to be matched in one or another of the non-Christian Bibles is now known to be a mistake. When some bumptious individual, in 1879, at a great meeting in Boston declared that certain gospel-passages which he quoted could not be paralleled anywhere else, Ralph Waldo Emerson, who happened to be in the audience, arose and with that sublime, serene, ethereal manner always characteristic of his utterances, suggested that "the gentleman's remark only proved how narrowly he had read."[1]

7. The old-time classification of religions—popular among missionaries in the middle of

[1] See Rodrigues, *Les origines du sermon de la Montagne.* See also my anthology entitled *Ideals of Life,* for illustrations of such parallels in the Bibles of the seven extant great religions.

the last century, according to which Christianity was put in a class by itself as the one, true, revealed religion and all other religions labeled false, natural, pagan, "the product of priestcraft and of the devil"—that classification has been utterly annulled by the science of comparative religion. Between Christianity and all other faiths a great gulf had been fixed. Christianity could not have friendly dealings with these aliens. All that was Christian was good, all that was non-Christian was evil in its influence, or at best very questionable. So slowly did the research work of the newly created science find acceptance that as late as 1884 there appeared a book edited by a Methodist missionary society, written by a number of the most honored missionaries and entitled *Doomed Religions.* To-day prominent Methodists hasten to affirm that with such an attitude toward non-Christian faiths, true investigation of the latter is made impossible and that apologetics is not to be confused with the science of comparative religion, which requires that every faith be allowed to speak its message for itself and the fact that a very ancient religion still exists indicates the presence of elements which look good to its people and deserving of their loyalty and

devotion. In other words, the comparative study of the Bibles of the great religions has dispensed for all time with the pious function of those conscientious missionaries who, believing no one could be "saved from hell-fire without knowledge of Christ," sought to snatch as many of the doomed heathen brands as possible from the burning, by preaching Christ to them and persuading them to acknowledge Him as God and Lord!

8. Many a book on comparative religion, once popular and convincing, has been accounted of little worth by reason of what this science has revealed. And here I am reminded of Æsop's fable of the Forester and the Lion. Walking, one day, through the woods, they fell to discussing the question, "Which is the stronger, a lion or a man?" Unable to settle the question to their mutual satisfaction, they were about to abandon further discussion when suddenly they came upon a piece of statuary representing a man in the act of throwing down a lion. "There," said the woodsman, "you see the man is the stronger." "Ah, yes!" said the lion, "but their positions would have been reversed if a lion had been the sculptor."

The application of the fable is obvious. Many

prejudiced Christians have been the sculptors of the non-Christian faiths and, *vice versa,* many prejudiced non-Christians have been sculptors of Christianity. Perhaps the best illustration of the former class is furnished by that most popular of all books on the subject, *The Ten Great Religions,* by James Freeman Clarke. I confess to choosing this illustration with considerable diffidence, for it was of him that the great Martineau once said to me, "Dr. Clarke is the New Englander whom I venerate most since the time of Channing." Moreover, I am mindful of the fact that the book appeared many years ago, when the science of comparative religion was still in its infancy. However, it is to be noted that the author exhibits a pronounced partiality for Christianity. He treats it as a *pleroma,* i. e., as having a fullness of content, possessing everything of value to be found in the other religions plus ideal elements peculiar to it alone. Moreover, each of the non-Christian faiths is estimated, evaluated from the point of view of Christianity as the criterion, as representing the absolute, the universal religion. The very cover of the book is embellished with a design symbolic of the bias with which the author approached his subject,

disqualifying him to sit as a juror upon the relative worth of the great religions. For, after all, *partiality is just as fatal to equity as is prejudice,* and every disciple is partial to his master.

Another illustration of this eighth result of the science of comparative religion is afforded by the monographs of the *Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge.* Many of them have been made obsolete because they show the selfsame bias, putting forth expositions of non-Christian religions that are distinctly unfair, all the excellent features of the books offset by evidences of prejudice and partiality.

A typical example of non-Christian writers exhibiting corresponding limitations when discussing Christianity, is given us in the book on *Mohammed and Islam,* by Ameer Seyd Ali (for some years a judge on the British bench at Bengal), in which the best in Mohammedanism is contrasted with the worst in Christianity.

9. The science of comparative religion, made possible by discovery of the Bibles of the great religions, has brought to light still another significant fact. It is that the relation of these religions to one another is not that of the steps of a ladder, but that of the branches of a tree. From an original trunk, religion, in the soul of

man, three great branches have radiated—the Aryan, the Semitic and the Turanian. Each of these has put forth lesser branches and from these again have issued twigs. To illustrate: From the Aryan branch have come Hinduism, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism; and from Hinduism a multiplicity of sects, such as Çivaism, Krishnaism, Vishnuism. Similarly, from Buddhism and Zoroastrianism sectarian divisions have sprung and, indeed, continue to spring.

Such being the relationship of religions, the science of comparative religion has caused the question of precedence among them to be set aside. No consensus of the competent can give the prime place to any one of the great religions. Some scholars have placed the Chinese religion in the forefront; others have accorded the palm of ancientness to India's earliest faith. Still other scholars have bestowed the laurel of priority upon Parsism, and some have claimed the crown of precedence for Israel. But the facts to support these claims are equal for and against each of the religions. Hence it follows that the question of supreme consequence is not one of antiquity, not one of successive steps of a ladder, but of various branches of an original trunk. The vital issue is not the place of each

with reference to all the rest, in time, but the feature in each that is distinctive, differentiating it from all the other religions.

10. A comparative study of the scriptures of the great religious systems of India, Persia, China, Arabia, has shown that while local, transient elements are present in them all, yet have they measures of universal and permanent worth, reminding us in many instances of what we have read in the scriptures with which we are most familiar.

Listen to a Hindu chant and you will think you have come upon a missing psalm of the Old Testament, so alike are they in spiritual content. Hear the Parsee, as he offers his prayer for purity, and how slight a change in the language of that prayer it would require in order to make it suit our spiritual need. We may not believe in "Nirvana," nor in "reincarnation," but we all must walk "the noble, eight-fold path" of Gautama, the Buddha, if rounded character is to be ours. Open the Koran of the Mohammedans, the Kings or the Analects of the Confucians, and in each case we find ourselves face to face with the credentials of a religion that speaks to us in accents strong, beautiful and sometimes even sublime.

In these ten of the more important results of the science of comparative religion we see the direct and immediate effect of the discovery and translation of the bibles of the great religions. Before leaving the subject it may be well to indicate briefly a certain indirect and remote effect. I refer to the World's Parliament of Religions held at Chicago in 1893. But for the discovery of the non-Christian Bibles and their rendering into the leading languages of Europe, that Parliament would have been impossible. We should still be waiting for such a convention had not a science of comparative religion grown out of the discovery of these oriental Bibles. And this, we may rightly affirm, albeit that in the sixteenth century something similar to such a convention had been held.

Akbar, the Mogul emperor of India, in 1575 gratified the disposition of the native intellectuals for religious disputation. He himself had been convinced of the value of free discussion on religious dogmas. And so he founded at Fathpur Sikri, his favorite residence in the vicinity of Agra, the famous *Bâdat Khâna,* literally, the "house of worship," but actually the house of controversy. It was a marble

structure of four halls in which scholars and religious men of various sects gathered together every Thursday evening and were given opportunity to defend their creeds in the presence of his imperial majesty. Here Hindus, Moslems, Jews, Christians, Parsees, met for free discussion of their respective creeds. Out of this ferment of religious hospitality there was produced that remarkable compilation known as the *Dabistan,* an impartial report of the confession of faith of each of these representatives of the conflicting faiths of India. One of the participants in these friendly conferences gave utterance to that noble sentence which expresses the spirit that should be in the heart of every sincere seeker after truth. "If thou art a Mussulman, go stay with the Franks, if thou art a Shiite, go mix with the Schismatics, if thou art a Christian, fellowship with the Jews; whatever be thy religion associate with those who think differently from thee. If thou canst mix with them freely and art not angered at hearing their discourse, thou hast attained peace and art a veritable master of creation."

But the aim of the World's Parliament was broader and more constructive. Nor, indeed, could its purpose have been fulfilled had not

some acquaintance with the Bibles of the great religions and the newly formed science of comparative religion prepared the way for it. Here at this august assemblage in Chicago was something that outrivaled every other achievement of the "World's Fair." Here, indeed, was something bigger than the Ferris wheel, more brilliant than the electrical display—yes, even that superb panorama of classic architecture which greeted our eyes as we stood on the Court of Honor—even that superb panorama paled before the procession of the world's great faiths. At the head of that procession walked a Swedenborgian layman, Mr. Charles C. Bonney, arm in arm with scarlet-robed Cardinal Gibbons, the highest dignitary of the Roman Catholic church in the United States. And behind them walked Greek and Jew, Confucian and Christian, Mohammedan and Parsee, Baptist missionary and Hindu monk, one hundred and twenty-eight pairs, all marching in one grand, triumphal procession of brotherhood. Would that some painter had been present to put on canvas that memorable scene, symbolic as it was of the death-knell of sectarian exclusiveness, prophetic as it was of the coming peace among the conflicting faiths of mankind. The

Parliament was conceived and planned by a Presbyterian minister in Chicago, Rev. J. Henry Barrows. The closing address was delivered by a Swedenborgian, the final prayer was offered by a Jewish Rabbi and the benediction pronounced by a Roman Catholic Bishop.

The effect of the Parliament upon both Christians and non-Christians was singularly striking and profound. To the latter, attendance meant the acquisition of corrected conceptions of Christianity. Remember that Christianity had come to these orientals in battleships and at the point of the bayonet. It had come to them, it is true, with the missionary and the Bible; but it had also come to them with opium and rum. Here, at the Parliament, these foreign delegates had a chance to see the finest products of our Western civilization; they had an opportunity to hear the foremost representatives of the Christian religion. The consequence was that they went back to their oriental homes with altered notions both of Christianity and its representatives.

The effect of the Parliament on the Christian delegates was no less important and striking. They dropped the pharisaism and spiritual conceit with which they formerly had prayed, "We

thank Thee, O Lord, that we are not as these pagan idolators." For here, among these so-called idolators, they found exemplars of a spirituality of which they never had dreamed. They heard prayers to "the Father in heaven" of which they thought these orientals incapable. Moreover, their eyes were opened to the fact that only one-third of the total population of the earth is Christian and that Christianity is the youngest of all the great religions, with the single exception of Mohammedanism. They found among these foreign delegates men who were masters in the field of religion and ethics and who, in their lives, bore witness to righteousness and to spirituality. And so with one accord these Christian clergymen recalled that noble sentence from the New Testament, "Are we not all children of one Father? Hath not one God created us?"

Another important result must be added. After that Parliament it was no longer possible for American missionaries to go to those oriental peoples with the notion that they were forever lost unless they happened to accept a particular system of theology. Indeed, in the Spring of 1894, six months after the Parliament was held, the American Board of Foreign Mis-

sions, at its annual convention, in Boston, raised the question, "Shall missionaries be allowed to go to Japan, to China, to Ceylon and other oriental points unless they are prepared to teach the doctrines of hell and the fall?" The question was laid upon the table; it has never since been raised; we are safe in believing that it will never be.

Just as that mammoth Chicago convention had its progenitor in the Thursday assemblies of Akbar four centuries and more ago, so in turn did it become the parent of many a minor parliament, both at home and abroad. To its influence, in truth, must be traced the contemplated "Hall of All Religions" to be built at Benares, the birthplace of the Buddha. And in conjunction with the *"Hall,"* there is to be an *"Academy"* for the study of comparative religion; a *"Library,"* to contain the sacred books of the great religions and the most noteworthy books about them; also a *"Home"* for the accommodation of students of the various ethnic faiths. A prospectus issued by the managers informs us that "this unique institution is established with the intention (1) to promote the spirit of harmony and brotherliness among mankind; (2) to promote reconciliation of all

religions by appeal to the fundamental spirituality underlying all faiths; (3) to seek effective means for bringing about permanent peace among the nations of the world; and (4) to serve the purpose of a research college for the comparative study of all religions." Obviously the basis of this latest inter-religious project is the conviction that sectarianism is doomed, that nobler than the unity which is merely Hindu, or Mohammedan, or Christian, is *human* unity. For it is not enough that we be brothers and sisters in Moses, or in Mohammed, or in Gautama, or in Jesus; we must be brothers and sisters *in Humanity with all the rest of mankind.* True brotherhood can compass no lesser fellowship.

And just as fast as men and women everywhere come to care more for spiritual freedom than they do for allegiance to tradition, or creed; as fast as people everywhere learn to care more for the triumph of truth than they do for the victory of their sect, so fast will the world be lifted above all differences of caste, creed, color, race, into that sublime religious fellowship which has been the dream of every age and of every race.

SCRIPTURE SELECTIONS FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT

(Introductory to Chapter II)

For this commandment which I command thee this day, it is not hidden from thee, neither is it afar off. It is not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? Neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? But the word is very nigh unto thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it. See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil; in that I command thee this day to love Yahweh thy God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments and his statutes and his judgments, that thou mayest live and multiply.—Deuteronomy xxx. 11-16.

Wherewith shall I come before Yahweh and bow myself before the high God? shall I come before Him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old?

Will Yahweh be pleased with thousands of rams, *or* with ten thousand rivers of oil? shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?

He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth Yahweh require of thee, but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?—Micah vi. 6-8.

SCRIPTURE SELECTIONS

Blessed is he that doeth righteousness at all times.

Open unto me the gates of righteousness and I will go in at them.

For all Thy Commandments are righteousness and he that worketh righteousness shall never be moved. —Psalms cvi, cxviii, cxix.

CHAPTER II

JUDAISM

There are seven great religions in the world to-day. Hinduism, Buddhism and Zoroastrianism belong to the *Aryan,* or Indo-European, branch of the human family. Confucianism is identified with the *Turanian* branch, while Judaism, Christianity and Mohammedanism make up the *Semitic* group of great religions. It is with this last group that we are to deal.

Judaism is the religion of a people whose story extends over thirty-five centuries and is, without exception, the most remarkable in the history of the nations; a people, homeless, suspected, persecuted; wanderers over the face of the earth, seeking a permanent home and finding none; a people subjected throughout the Christian centuries to gross indignities from the people of Jesus and Paul, both of whom were Jews; a people victimized by prejudice so deep and inhuman that even little children of refined Jewish parents have come home from school

crying because of the abuse heaped on them by the children of parents whose finest religious inheritances are from Moses and his successors; a people whose religious patriotism has been so intensified by persecution that even the most liberal among them insist on remaining Jews so long as Christians make it a reproach to be a Jew; a people who founded the first universities of continental Europe and who, in an age of superstition, when faith was blind and ignorance a passport to Paradise, fostered education and advanced the arts and sciences; a people who count among the contributors to our civilization the illustrious astronomers Zuerto and Gersonides, whose genius provided Columbus with chart and quadrant; Astruc and Ibn Ezra, fathers of the higher criticism of the Bible; Maimonides and Spinoza, philosophers whose influence is still felt to-day; Heine, Auerbach, the Mendelssohns, and the Montefiores; a people numbering to-day thirteen millions; and of the one million or more here in Greater New York it must be said that, as a class, they are the most self-respecting, self-reliant, self-supporting, law-abiding portion of our mixed population.

The fountain source of religious inspiration in the Christian world is the Old Testament, the Bible of Judaism. Whether we turn to the Roman Catholic *Breviary* or to the Protestant *Book of Common Prayer* we find both replete with the spiritual poetry of the Psalms and the ethical messages of the Prophets.

Strange that in the light of this acknowledged indebtedness to the Old Testament, the Christian Church should have permitted bitter and persistent persecution of the Jews. How shall we account for this astounding contradiction of the Christian Church; on the one hand, drawing inspiration from the Jewish Bible, accepting Jesus the Jew as their Savior, and, on the other hand, persecuting the people of Jesus and of the Old Testament? The key to the explanation is found in certain verses of the Old Testament that were said to predict the coming of the Messiah; for example, the sixth and seventh verses of the ninth chapter of Isaiah: "Unto us a child is born, a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government

and peace there shall be no end."[1] The Christian Church interpreted this and kindred passages as referring to Jesus and as having been fulfilled in him. Orthodox Judaism, however, denied both the reference and the fulfillment, holding that the Messiah is yet to come and that his name is unknown. Now because of Jewish refusal to accept the Christian view, persecution set in. The Jews must suffer for their denial that Jesus is the Messiah and in order that they may one day bear witness to the truth of that Messiahship, they are not to be totally exterminated, but, instead, to be bitterly and persistently persecuted for their unbelief.

What has sustained these scourged victims of Christian persecution? It was not the belief in personal immortality, because that was not a part of their religion from the start. They saw eternal values in the present life and built up a doctrine of rewards and punishments without belief in conscious, active survival of death. Was it, then, the "hope of Zion," the rebuilding of Jerusalem with all the other nations looking on at "the glory of God in the restored

[1] It may be noted incidentally that the context clearly indicates that the expected Deliverer is not a distant Messiah, but one to be born very soon, his name a symbol of Yahweh's power and presence with his people.

Israel?'' No, for that hope had died down twenty centuries ago; and though every Passover feast witnessed the formal repetition of the ancient dream, every devout Jew realized it was only formal and hence their comfort and stay were not founded upon the thought of Zion. No, what sustained and upheld the Jew throughout the Christian centuries was his deep-seated trust in Yahweh, the Eternal and Infinite One, and the conviction that if man but put his will into accord with the will of this Infinite and Eternal Power, fulfilling His Commandments, then no real harm could ever touch him, no evil oppressors or persecutors permanently resist the Omnipotent Will of the Existent One. Hence the ''Shema'' at every religious service: ''Hear, O Israel the Lord our God is One,'' the One and only reality, commune with Him, sanctify His name by fulfilling His law of righteousness. Is Israel persecuted? ah, then it can only be because Israel has gone astray from the path of fulfillment. Let her then make the persecution a means of self-purification, an instrument for return to the forsaken path. This, I take it, is the secret of the unparalleled tenacity of Israel, her ultimate source of comfort and consolation—letting the

sin committed against her become the means of purifying her from her own sin, all the while conscious of the never-to-be-lost relation to the Existent One.

Just whence the ancestors of this people came is still one of the vexed problems of ethnology. We meet with them first in the Tigris-Euphrates valley, Mesopotamia—the land between the rivers.[2] Here they lived a nomadic life, with customs, beliefs and practices like other peoples at that stage of development, worshiping the spirits of springs, trees, rocks, mountains. Moreover, the main motive for worship in that primitive period was fear, the polytheism eventually giving way to monotheism and the fear to trust.

Having crossed the Arabian desert, they continued their wandering life. For a time they stayed at Goshen on the borders of Egypt and finally settled down to agricultural life in Canaan, northeast of Goshen. Here they gradu-

[2] Having emigrated from the far side of the Euphrates they were called Hebrews, "Ibrim"—men from the other side (of the river). They called themselves "children of Israel," after Jacob, who, according to the legend of the thirty-second chapter of Genesis, was named "Israel," Prince of God. After the exile in Babylon, they were called "Jews," the name first given to the tribe of Judah, and which constituted the chief portion of those who returned to rebuild Jerusalem.

ally developed the religion whose solemn record has been preserved for us in the Old Testament, a religion which, in the course of its evolution, ranged from crude fetishism to a noble monotheism, and from a semicivilized moral code to the ethical heights of the exilian prophets.

All that has been recorded of the Hebrews prior to the time of David (950 B. C.) is so enveloped in legendary lore that one cannot speak of it with any degree of accuracy or assurance. The higher criticism is still confronted with the task of separating fiction from fact in the period prior to David's day.

Herder, the German dramatist, once compared the religions of mankind to the strings of a harp, each giving forth its own distinctive note.[3] Applying Herder's simile to Judaism we find its contribution to the religious symphony to be *righteousness,* a word that gained in breadth and depth of content throughout Old Testament times, yet stood ever for a standard of conduct of which Yahweh is the author. True, moral thinking and practice had existed everywhere and for ages, but the idea of morality as divine in its source, as spiritual in its in-

[3] For fuller discussion of this see my *Symphony of Religions,* pp. 21, 22.

most essence is Hebraic. And the message of Israel is universal in so far as it is founded on the conviction that there is a moral nature in each human being and that this moral nature is spiritual. Accept the divine standard of righteousness, strive to live up to its requirements, fulfill the law of righteousness and thereby come into at-one-ment with the Eternal One. Such is the distinctive message of Judaism as revealed in our ultimate source of information, the Old Testament. Let us now trace the history of Israel, noting how the concept of righteousness was construed from age to age.

Ethical progress was twofold: on the one hand, there occurred a gradual raising of the moral standard; and, on the other hand, the conception of righteousness became more and more definitely and systematically identified with the will of Yahweh and was ultimately embodied in legal codes. The pre-prophetic period accounted a man righteous if he acknowledged Yahweh and conformed to the moral ideas of the community. The prophets made righteousness consist in worship of Yahweh alone and compliance with the social and ethical rules of the time. To them idolatry was disloyalty to Israel's God, a sin against the covenant He had made with

His people. A distinct forward step was taken when Jeremiah and Ezekiel propounded their doctrine of the true righteousness as consisting not merely in acts of obedience, but rather in a "new heart," whence impulses proceeded in harmony with the divine standard of right.[4]

Such righteousness was acquired by man's free effort. But the attempted formulation of a law, intended to cover every aspect of human life, not only failed but also tended, inevitably, by stressing the outward standard, to eclipse that inward devotion which is the essence of spirituality. The prescriptions of the Law included duties of various kinds, ceremonial, civil, moral, religious, with no differentiation as to their relative worth, and as long as these were properly observed the thoughts and interests of the heart were overlooked. God became "metamorphosed into a list of commands and life into a chaos of obediences" and so prepared the way for the reforming gospel of Jesus.

Go back with me in thought to the patriarchal age, in which Abraham overshadows all other personalities.[5] He is represented as the first

[4] Jeremiah xxiv. 7; Ezekiel xviii. 31.

[5] It has been argued that Abraham is the name of a tribe not of an individual. But even so the tribe had a chief and his name may well have been Abraham.

Jew to leave the ancestral home in Mesopotamia, going from "Ur of Chaldea" westward, there to lay the foundations of a new nation. He is further represented as making a contract, or "covenant," with Yahweh according to which He agrees to be the God of the people of Abraham and to further their interests provided they acknowledge Him and fulfill His commandments. And in the very heart of the contract are these wonderful words: "Become ye perfect, be ye a source of blessing, recognize me your God."

Second only to Abraham in historical importance is Moses, the father of Hebrew liberty and legislation, framer of the original moral code from which the ten commandments, as we know them, were developed; emancipator of his fellow Hebrews from subserviency to the Egyptians. It would carry us too far afield to review the whole story of his life and work. Let it suffice to recall the most dramatic moment in his philanthropic career, the moment which the genius of Michael Angelo translated into stone and which adorns the Church of San Pietro in Vincoli at Rome. It represents the great legislator as having descended from the mount of inspiration with the tables of the Law under his arm,

about to communicate the Divine decree to his emancipated people. But in that very moment he sees them dancing about an Egyptian idol. His eyes flash with scorn, his beard trembles with emotion, his left foot is thrown wildly back. You realize that in the next moment he will have risen and dashed the sacred tables to the ground. Standing before this colossal statue one hardly knows which to admire more, the sculptor's genius as an artist or his mastery of the Pentateuchal record. Grant that the substance of the lost original code of Moses was derived from parts of Hammurabi's—as the inscription on the black marble pillar discovered at Persepolis, would suggest—yet it must be admitted that some genius was required to adapt the Babylonian code to the needs of Hebrew life. Hedging men about with its "thou shalt" and "thou shalt not," the Mosaic code was declared to be divinely ordained, a transcendent law of righteousness, an absolute imperative of duty. Even the mandate "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth" which belongs to the ethics of this period, represents not revenge, but righteousness, justice as it was then understood.

After the death of Moses the separate tribes,

which had formed a loose confederation, found that only in solid union is there strength. Accordingly, about the year 1060 B. C., a Hebrew monarchy was organized with Saul as the first king. For nearly a century prosperity and peace were so in the ascendant that later generations looked back upon this period as the golden age of Hebrew history. But when Solomon's son, Rehoboam, refused to reduce the taxes that had been levied for the building of the temple and when twice in succession the candidate for the throne was chosen from among the southern tribes, the northern group rebelled. The result was a division of the United Kingdom into "Israel" and "Judah," a northern and a southern kingdom, the former dating from 960 to 722 B. C. and the latter outliving the northern kingdom by a century and a half, to 585 B. C.

Both kingdoms, during the first hundred years of their existence, developed a strong and many-sided civilization, yet not without its dark and dangerous features, as we learn from the historical book of "Kings." For the record tells us that along with developing prosperity there was a slackening of devotion to Yahweh and His commandments, that with the increase

of wealth came the curse of luxury; that acquaintance with the licentious practices of the Canaanitish religion corrupted public and private morals; that when all the people aided in the tilling of the soil, there was no poverty to be abolished, whereas the growth of the commercial spirit and the tendency of land to fall into the hands of a few were productive of disastrous consequences. Creditors snatched children from their parents to extort the money they could not otherwise obtain (2 Kings iv. 1). Hunger compelled some who were in poverty to put themselves voluntarily under bondage for bread (1 Samuel ii. 5). The law tried to ameliorate the lot of such slaves by limiting their servitude to six years, but it was not always observed (Jeremiah xxxiv). David and some of his successors seized lands from their subjects and gave the property to favorite nobles (1 Samuel viii. 14). The story of Naboth (1 Kings xxi) illustrates one of the many acts of injustice of those days and the rapaciousness of the rich who "added field to field," dispossessing the small landholders and confiscating the common lands. The record tells of merchants reclining on ivory couches, eating young calves and drinking costly wines from golden bowls to the music

of the timbrel and the viol, reveling in luxuries while they extorted high prices from their customers and "sold the poor into slavery for their debt on a pair of shoes" (Amos ii. 6; vi. 6). Nay, more, the record tells also of a war-cloud, at first no bigger than a man's hand, spreading westward from Assyria till it hung over this brilliant, prosperous, luxurious, cultured, demoralized Hebrew civilization of the eighth century.

Then it was that there appeared in both the northern and the southern kingdom a succession of great moral leaders, whose cry was fulfill the law of righteousness, an order of prophets such as no other nation has ever developed. The finest flower of Athenian thought was devoted to philosophy and art. The genius of ancient Rome spent itself in the development of law. But the noblest representatives of Israel were consecrated to the ideals of an ethical religion. These men were not soothsayers, diviners, clairvoyants. Rather were they the successors of this class in Israel. Not foretellers but forthtellers they were. That is to say, they predicted coming bondage to foreign powers, not on the basis of any occult practices, but rather on the basis of the belief that

they were the mouthpiece of the Most High, and on the basis of study of the economic, political, social, moral and religious conditions of their time. Statesmen they were, of the highest type. They pointed to the sacred contract that had been made between Israel and Yahweh, the terms of which had been grossly violated by the people for whose benefit the covenant had been made. They had allowed themselves to think that just because such a covenant *had* been made Yahweh would be permanently, inseparably bound up with the national welfare. They forgot that their God is a righteous God, "the Holy One," and that, as such, He demands righteousness as the *sine quâ non* of Divine protection and bounty. Hence the immediate function of the prophets was to draw the attention of a sinful people to this neglected aspect of the covenant. They interpreted the varying vicissitudes of the nation in terms of failure to fulfill the law of righteousness, which, for them, consisted in abjuring idolatry and maintaining ethical relations in daily life. When prosperity came, it meant a fulfillment of Yahweh's promise; when adversity crossed their path, it was the sign of failure on the part of the chosen people to fulfill their part of the contract, a

Divine chastising that meant also a preparation for future blessings. And the greater the misfortunes of the nation, the more fixed and intense became the faith of the prophets that Yahweh would not forsake His people, but through the discipline of suffering and sorrow bring them back to Himself and His commandments and so fit them for a glorious future. There were those who advocated fleeing to the altar and doubling the sacrifices in time of danger or disaster, but the prophets preached the utter futility and folly of such externalism. They held steadfastly to their conviction that at such times the sole source of safety lies in the practice of ethical religion. They warned the people again and again that the precursors of national death are injustice, greed, pride and wantonness. These prophets did not wait to be hired to preach and they could not be bought to keep still. Again and again did they embarrass kings and constantly were their relations with the masses strained. Instead of chiming in with the jingoism of their day, they cried, "Wash you, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes, saith Yahweh."

First in the long line of illustrious forthtellers

was Amos, a cattle rancher, impelled to quit his ranch and go up to town as the divinely inspired reformer of a demoralized community.[6] He breaks in on a Friday evening religious meeting at Bethel and declares that its Sabbath service is worse than useless because Yahweh hates such worship on the Sabbath when on week-days the worshipers practice injustice and inhumanity. Moreover, he boldly announces that the punishment Yahweh has ordained is an Assyrian captivity with all the tribulation it involves. As a student of existing conditions Amos foresaw what would happen and in 722 B. C. his prediction was fulfilled,[7] Sargon, King of Assyria, capturing Samaria, the capital of the northern kingdom, and deporting thousands of its inhabitants to Nineveh—the first in a succession of foreign subjugations that extended over the next six centuries.

Contemporary with Amos, though fifteen years his junior, was Hosea. Both prophets addressed themselves chiefly to the northern kingdom. But whereas Amos was stern, relentless, fiery in his appeal for national reformation, Hosea was tender, compassionate, gentle;

[6] Amos vii. 14, 15.

[7] Amos ii; v.

not arguing but pleading with his people, passionately beseeching them to mend their ways. Hosea had been deceived by his wife, and he uses her infidelity as a simile to rebuke Israel's infidelity to Yahweh. In terms of the conjugal relation Hosea pleads, nor is he wholly without hope of Israel's redemption. For even as in his own home a reconciliation had been brought about with his wife, so might this prefigure the reconciliation that should come to Israel, forestalling divorce from Yahweh.

In the southern kingdom at this time were Isaiah and Micah. The former is commonly called the first Isaiah to distinguish him from the prophet of the Babylonian captivity. He, too, was stern, impetuous, fiery, like Amos. He diagnosed the social and moral situation in language unsurpassed for vigor, eloquence and religious sentiment.[8] Why, it was asked, is Yahweh's favor withheld? Isaiah's answer is, because in vain did He call His people to repentance, because the morality essential to prosperity was not practiced, because reliance was put upon sacrifice of animals instead of the sacrifices of the heart. He called attention to (*a*) retail dealers who extorted abnormal prices

[8] Read more especially chapters i, v, x, xi.

for their wares and who were thus responsible for the high cost of living; (*b*) hucksters using false weights and measures; (*c*) judges accepting bribes; (*d*) priests spending money on themselves that was collected for temple repairs; (*e*) women over-adorned with bracelets and chains, head-bands and earrings, hand-mirrors and perfumes.[9]

It is to Micah (like unto Hosea in his tenderness and compassion) that we are indebted for what is perhaps the high-water mark of ethical utterance in the Old Testament. "He hath showed thee, O man, what is good, for what doth Yahweh require of thee, but to do justly, to love mercy and to walk in humility before thy God."

Reform ensued, however, only to be soon followed by relapse into the old ways. And then appears the book of Deuteronomy with its intense, passionate plea for piety, for free, willing obedience to Yahweh's will. Meanwhile Assyria had been captured by the Babylonians (606 B. C.). Judah, in short order, becomes subjugated to *Babylon* as was Israel to *Assyria.* The downfall of Judah had been foreseen by that grandest of all the statesmen-prophets of

[9] Isaiah iii. 16 foll.

the Old Testament, Jeremiah. He stood one day at the temple gate with a wooden yoke around his neck, meaning thereby to symbolize a brief captivity for Judah in Babylon. Jeremiah fervently believed it was Yahweh's will and mode of chastisement for Judah that she should come for a time under the Babylonian yoke. But a hot-headed leader of the opposition that favored rebellion and violation of the treaty with Babylon, stepped forward and smashed the wooden yoke, "Whereupon the word of Yahweh came to Jeremiah saying, tell Hananiah (this fiery member of the militant party) who has broken the bar of wood that thou wilt make one of iron instead" (Jeremiah xxviii. 12). By this the prophet meant that the captivity would be prolonged because of this defiance of the divine will as Jeremiah believed he understood it. And history vindicated his forecast by extending the exile period to fifty years. He did all in his power to stem the tide of national decline and for a reward he was pilloried in the public square, lowered into a muddy cistern, dungeoned in prison. While there he dictated to his secretary Baruch an ethico-religious address bidding him read it aloud in the temple on the next fast day. Word

of this plan reached the ears of the priests. They told it to the nobles and the nobles confided it to the King. He was sitting before the fire in his winter palace when the manuscript which he had ordered to be brought to him was read. Calling for a knife he cut the scrolls into strips and threw them into the fire. Thus did history repeat itself. How often have ecclesiastical and political despots sought to crush free thought and free speech by burning the books of the authors whose convictions were brighter than flames and like asbestos withstood the fire designed to consume them. Jeremiah redictated the address and for this he was banished to Egypt where, after more than forty years of consecrated service, he died a martyr's death, stoned by the people whose kinsmen he had served so devotedly and so long.[10]

The two great prophets of the Babylonian exile were Ezekiel and the second Isaiah. The former makes a special claim on our attention because he lifted the conception of righteousness to the level of an inner spiritual condition. He had caught a glimpse of that morality of the spirit which, as we shall see, Jesus expounded

[10] For a further account of Jeremiah see my *Great Religious Teachers of the East*, pp. 172-177.

with such singular clarity and fervor. Ezekiel pleaded for something more than obedience to rules and regulations—an inward, spontaneous, free, whole-hearted allegiance to the Divine Will.

The second Isaiah rejoices to realize that there is a small nucleus of the nation which has fulfilled the law of righteousness. He personifies this group and designates it "the suffering servant of Yahweh." It is composed of all those who have suffered exile and yet done no wrong. Why, then, should they suffer? The prophet's answer is, because they have an indispensable function to fulfill for the good of the entire nation. They are, in truth, "the saving remnant" of Israel. Their suffering is vicarious. It pays the price required by Yahweh, according to His law of sacrifice, for reinstating the rest of the exiles in the divine favor. The abundant righteousness of the remnant served to supply the lack of the rest of the nation and the suffering of the righteous remnant thus became efficacious as a means of national redemption. Hence the remark of Isaiah, "It pleased Yahweh to bruise His servant," because of the redemptive value of the suffering. Moreover, the sufferer, once aware

of the beneficent effect of his suffering, "tastes its fruit and is satisfied." [11]

In other words, the "righteous remnant" saves the unrighteous mass, brings it again into at-one-ment with Yahweh because its quantum of righteousness suffices to make up for the sins of the mass. Thus the wrath of God, incurred by national sinfulness, was appeased.

Obviously, in the familiar chapter of the exilian Isaiah's work, we recognize the germ out of which eventually the Christian doctrine of the Atonement was evolved.

As Assyria had succumbed to Babylon, so Babylon yielded to Persia and Judah now became a *Persian* dependency. Cyrus permitted the exiles to return to Jerusalem. According to the record some forty thousand availed themselves of the opportunity. They rebuilt the temple destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar and inaugurated a new era of Jewish life in Palestine. With the coming of Ezra, the law student, from Babylon to Jerusalem, about 450 B. C., the people were provided with a systematic formulation of the righteousness that Yahweh required of them, viz., the Pentateuch. It covered civil and religious legislation of eight centuries, em-

[11] Isaiah liii. 10-12.

bracing no less than five distinct codes, the whole edited presumably by Ezra. Under the inspiration of Haggai and the third Zechariah (author of the first eight chapters of the book that bears his name), prophets of "the return," the people were encouraged in the work of rehabilitating the conditions destroyed at the siege of Jerusalem in 586 B. C. The temple was rebuilt and the priestly class is once more in the ascendant, only, however, to be supplanted by the scribes dedicated to the written Law. With the conquest of Persia by Greece, Judea became a *Greek* dependency, but not without first enjoying a century of independence, through the valorous and intrepid Judas Maccabeus, whose illustrious achievements are celebrated annually at the festival of "Hannukah." No sooner had the glorious century passed than civil war arose among the successors of Judas, and in 64 B. C. the Roman, Pompey, was sent by Cæsar to quell the disturbance. Judea then became a *Roman* province, Greece having meanwhile been conquered by Rome.

Three significant facts concerning this succession of subjugations to foreign powers must be noted.

First, while it robbed the people of their polit-

ical independence, it deepened their religious consciousness, made them more profoundly aware of their relation to their God and intensified their conviction that His truth was in the Law and the Prophets. It gave them a new sense of themselves as His chosen people, chosen not on their own account, but to serve as His agents in making Him known to the rest of the world.

Second, despite the ever-recurring subjugations, the Prophets kept firm hold on the necessity of preaching Righteousness. In their hearts the sense of duty burned with an unsurpassed intensity and glow. And this, as Professor Adler has impressively observed, "explains their capacity for moral indignation, the august authority with which they speak, as though the Moral Law were uttering itself through them." It explains also the precision with which they point to the root-sin of the nation, the lightning-stroke with which they smite the guilty soul and the soothing balm of comfort they instill into doubting and despondent hearts.

The third significant fact is that these subjugations bred no pessimism in the hearts of the prophets. On the contrary, the star of hope continued to shine with ever-increasing bril-

liancy from the days of Amos down, the hope taking on ever greater definiteness and concreteness till it culminated in the conception of a Messianic Kingdom, a "City of Light," from whose borders wrong would be banished and justice reign supreme over all." Thus did an optimistic gospel form parts of the religion of Israel. Jewish patriotism was unlike every other because it was quickened and organized by religious feeling, by the mighty conception of a covenant according to which Yahweh had chosen Israel from among all the nations of the earth and had promised him His blessing forever on condition that he prove loyal and obedient. In the light of that covenant each new subjugation in turn was interpreted, chastisement being but the intended preparation for a glorious future. Assyria, Egypt, Babylon, Persia, Greece, Rome,—each in turn held the Hebrews in subjection, yet never did they lose their grip on the belief that all the nations of the earth would come to the knowledge of Yahweh and His Law and so share the Kingdom prepared for His chosen ones.

Even Amos, whose prophecy is preëminently pessimistic, has a vision of Israel, "sifted as is corn in a sieve," and Yahweh suffering "not a

single grain to fall to the earth."[12] Hosea sees the branches of Israel spread their beauty like those of the olive tree and all who dwell under their shadow rejoicing in the ways of the Lord.[13] Isaiah, living in the thick of the Assyrian invasion, draws a dark picture of what must follow the corruption of Israel, but beyond the gloom he descries the outline of a regenerated nation ruled by a blameless King in righteousness and peace.[14] Jeremiah, though chastisement is his dominant thought, never believed in the ruin of his people. Rather did he see in the exile the instrument whereby Yahweh accomplished his beneficent punishment of a recalcitrant people. Into captivity must they go but only to be in due time restored to their own land and live prosperously under one of their own princes and with a new covenant, Yahweh writing His Law into their hearts.[15] The exilian Isaiah carries the prophetic optimism further still, idealizing Israel herself into a divinely-appointed instrument for the enlightening and healing of the nations. Joel and the third Zechariah, living in the period of the Greek rule,

[12] Amos ix. 9.
[13] Hosea xiv. 6.
[14] Isaiah xi. 1-9.
[15] Jeremiah xxxi. 31-34.

echo the exalted strain, while the author of the ninth chapter of Isaiah, the contemporary of these prophets, enlarges upon the vision still more, telling of the Davidic King whose dynasty shall last forever and who shall be called "Immanuel, Wonderful, Counselor, Prince of Peace."

And when prophecy had died out and given place, first to *priestly* and then to *scribal* authorities, the ancient patriotic hope continued to glow, witness the Apocalyptic literature of the "Pseudepigrapha," between the Testaments, books that tell of the Messiah coming from heaven, in glory, to establish the Kingdom of God on earth. Thence we pass to the New Testament, the latest book of which—the second epistle of Peter—tells of the bitter disappointment felt at the inexplicable delay of the "Parousia or Advent of the Christ." "Where is the promise of his coming, for since the fathers fell asleep all things remain as they were from the beginning" (iii. 4). From that day to this the heavens have remained silent; the old order of the world has gone as of yore and Israel's hope, born in the days of Amos and developed throughout the succeeding seven cen-

turies into a mighty "Messianic" expectation, remains void of fulfillment.

Was it then, an empty, baseless dream? Nay, rather was it an expression of the deathless hope in the human heart that truth will prevail and justice be victorious.

Religion has been defined as "the homesickness of the soul"—a definition as beautiful in form as it is true in thought. Here in this world, amid clashing interests, sordid pursuits and selfish success, we are not at home. Our true home is where justice and righteousness dwell and we can have no permanent peace till we find our home in these. Such, I take it, is the permanent idea at the heart of that age-long transient Hebrew hope. Nor is there any other factor in social progress so indispensable as this very expectancy. "Unless your soul dwells in Utopia," said David Starr Jordan, "life is not worth the keeping." What, under heaven, is there to sustain us in our work for social reform except the spell exercised upon us by the vision of the Commonwealth of Man, the expectation of triumphant justice and brotherhood as a normal occurrence that must some day come to pass? Strip the ancient Hebrew hope

of its local, transient element, and what remains is an everlasting source of inspiration for America and for the world. 'Tis the mental picture of an ideal social order-yet-to-be; a society in which no one will treat another as merely a means to his ends, but also as an end in himself; in which sacredness and worth (value on his own account) will be ascribed to every human being, because of his moral nature and the potentialities that are latent in him; in which life, liberty, the pursuit of happiness, culture, will be a possibility for all instead of only the few; a society in which all men and women shall be carried, not as serfs, but as free intelligent agents, through the willing coöperation of each with all, forward to all the things that are most worth while. Such is the permanent element in the transient Messianic hope of ancient Israel.

At one of the early councils of the Christian Church it was moved to eliminate the Old Testament and make the Christian Bible consist of the New Testament alone. But the motion was lost. Think what utter, irretrievable spiritual misfortune would have followed had the motion carried! For, in that case, the Christian scriptures would have been robbed not only of the finest of the Psalms, but also of that ethical mes-

sage of the Prophets which ranks among the supreme and permanent spiritual assets of the race.

Without fear of contradiction it may be said that as long as man lives on this planet, they who wish to make progress in the upper zones of their being must turn to Israel for inspiration, to those psalmists, poets and prophets of the Old Testament who saw in righteousness the very core of religion and who held with unceasing and unflagging zeal the mighty expectation of a coming Commonwealth of Man.

Side by side with the development of a doctrine of righteousness, embodied in legal codes and in prophetic preaching, there was also a theistic development, the God-idea gaining in moral and spiritual content with the national discipline of suffering and the deepening insight of successive prophets. Five distinct stages in the evolution of Hebrew monotheism may be traced.

1. As nomads, without a permanent abode, the Hebrews worshiped the "spirits" believed to reside in heavenly bodies and forces. Survivals of this "*Animism*" are preserved for us in certain titles for deity; e.g., El-Elyon = the high-in-the-heavens-One (Genesis xiv. 18);

Shaddai—Mighty One (Genesis xvii. 1). Yahweh, conceived as a thunder-god (Psalms xviii. 8-15).

2. As nomads, the Hebrews recognized certain places and objects as the residence of a deity. Survivals of this *Fetichism* are seen in the oak of Mamre (Genesis xiii. 18), the tamarisk of Beersheba (Genesis xxi. 33), the burning bush (Deuteronomy xxxiii. 16), the sacred stones, e.g., at Bethel (Genesis xxviii. 18-22), at Gibeon (2 Samuel xx. 8), the rock of Israel (Psalms xxviii. 3), Joshua's stone (Joshua xxiv. 26), the "Massebah" of Hosea (Hosea iii. 4), the "teraphim" of Laban, of David, of Micah, resembling the human form and analogous to the "Lares and Penates" of the Romans (Genesis xxxi. 31; Judges xvii. 5; 1 Samuel xix. 13), the "brazen serpent" of Moses, Jeroboam's "bulls," the golden calf, Solomon's ox and lion (2 Kings xviii. 4; 1 Kings xii. 28; vii. 25; Exodus xxii.). Both Animism and Fetishism persisted throughout the period of the Judges and the Kings.

3. As agriculturalists, settled in Canaan, the Hebrews were influenced by the "Canaanitish religion." They adopted the "Baalim," or

gods of the soil, and these were worshiped down to the time of Hosea, jointly with Yahweh the national God. Evidences of this *Polytheism* are seen in Judges xi. 24, 1 Samuel xxvi. 19, 1 Kings xi. 7—Yahweh being regarded as *a* god among other gods. Ashtoreth, goddess of chastity, was worshiped at Askalon and at Sidon (1 Kings xi. 33). Among the other gods recognized as existing *beside* Yahweh were, *Chemosh,* god of the Moabites; *Milcom,* god of the Ammonites; *Dagon,* god of the Philistines. During the period covering the nomadic life of the Hebrews and the first three centuries of settled agricultural life, Yahweh was conceived in a thoroughly anthropomorphic fashion; e.g., as walking in the Garden of Eden in the *cool* of the day, as sitting at Abraham's tent, as smelling and enjoying the savor of Noah's sacrifice, as repenting that He had set Saul up as King, as endorsing the cunning of Rebecca, etc. (Genesis iii. 8; vi. 5; viii. 21; xviii. 14, 21; 1 Samuel xv. 11).

4. With the appearance of the prophets a further step was taken away from Polytheism to *Henotheism;* i.e., the singling out of one god from among many as the special object of worship. In the conflict of Yahwehism vs. Poly-

theism the former triumphed under Elijah's leadership about the year 840 B. C. Other gods were still believed to exist but they were regarded as wholly inferior to Yahweh. He is now *the* God among gods, even as before He was *a* god among gods (Micah iv. 5; Hosea xii. 3, 4; Exodus xv. 11). Moreover, Yahweh is now described as "the Holy One," "the Righteous One" (Isaiah vi. 3; Hosea xv. 9).

5. Not until the exile (585-535 B. C.) was *Monotheism* reached and Yahweh looked upon as *the only* existing God. (Habakkuk ii. 19; Jeremiah x. 3-10; Isaiah xi. 18-31). Furthermore, Yahweh is now designated "father" (Psalms ciii. 13; Isaiah xiv. 8) and, during the post-exilian period, under Greek rule, the provincial name *Yahweh* gave place to the broader name *God* (Leviticus xxiv. 11; Exodus xx. 7; Ecclesiastes, Daniel i. and Chronicles). Nevertheless, it is *Israel's* God who is the God of all the world and 'tis He who is to be "made known to the heathen." Indeed, Israel was "chosen" from among the nations, not for any virtue of her own but for the purpose of making Israel's God known to all non-Israelites.

Belief in immortality formed no part of the creed of Judaism until the period of Greek op-

pression (200 B. C.). In the Old Testament there is no clean-cut statement of such a belief except in the book of Daniel, written about 165 B. C. "Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life and some to everlasting contempt" (xii. 4). Elsewhere we find a few passages that can be construed only as dim intimations of immortality (Job xix. 25-27; Psalms xlix., xvi.). According to the late Professor Toy the context of these passages points only to *earthly* well being.[16] The prophets, it is true, had taught *national* immortality; they thought of their people as continuing forever, but of personal, conscious, active survival of death we read, for the first time, in the *Wisdom of Solomon,* an Apocryphal work deeply tinged with Greek thought. Here the vexed question of the suffering righteous and the prosperous wicked is solved in terms of a future life in which the ends of justice will be completely worked out. Throughout the entire stretch of Old Testament history, down to the third century, a doctrine of rewards and punishments obtained that was in keeping with the Semitic conception of Sheol —the underworld whither good and bad souls

[16] C. H. Toy, *Judaism and Christianity,* pp. 379-381.

departed at death to eke out a shadowy, colorless existence. According to this doctrine the righteous man is rewarded in *this* life, by length of days, prosperity, health and a large family. One or another, perchance all of these blessings attended the man who "walked not in the counsels of the wicked," while for him who did so there came premature death, or sickness, or poverty, or childlessness, or perhaps all four (Psalms i.). But experience soon showed that this doctrine was often disproved. The books of *Job* and *Ecclesiastes* reflect the skepticism generated by bitter experience. But the prevailing conception respecting immortality remained negative and gloomy until the second century, in which the aforementioned *Wisdom of Solomon* was written. Here immortality is regarded as an established fact, beyond the pale of skepticism. This conviction may have been reached (like that of a resurrection) through Egyptian influences which were operative in Alexandria when this book was being written. Thus the ancient Hebrew idea of Sheol gradually gave place to the belief in a place of happiness for the righteous and a place of punishment for the wicked. "Hell" is not found in the Old Testament, neither is "heaven," but, once sug-

gested (perhaps through Persian and Egyptian sources), both conceptions became part of the later Judaism and found their way thence into Christianity.

SCRIPTURE SELECTIONS FROM THE NEW TESTAMENT

(Introductory to Chapter III)

Before faith came we were kept under the Law, debarred from the faith which was later on to be revealed. Wherefore the Law was our tutor to bring us unto Christ that we might be justified by faith. But now that faith is come we are no longer under a tutor. For ye all are the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ did put on Christ. There can be neither Jew nor Greek, bond or free, for ye all are one in Christ Jesus.—Galatians iii. 23-28.

The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof. —Romans xiii. 12-14.

For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin.

For that which I do, I allow not; for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good. Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. For I know that in me

(that is in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing, for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.

Now if I do that which I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man. But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.—Romans vii. 14-25.

CHAPTER III

CHRISTIANITY

The true starting point from which the rise of Christianity may be treated is the return of the disciples from Galilee to Jerusalem after the crucifixion of their Master. But for the revival of courage and faith in their hearts after the crushing blow of that tragedy, Christianity, as a religion rooted in the Christ idea, would never have been born. Given the conviction of those disciples that Jesus could not remain permanently in Sheol with all the rest of the dead, that he must somehow have escaped and ascended into heaven; given also the belief of the impulsive, neurotic Peter that he had actually seen Jesus, and the conditions were provided for transforming cowardly disciples into heroes and renegades into apostles. Peter's belief in a physical resurrection of Jesus was the *consequence not the cause* of his conviction that the beloved Master, whom he had denied in his hour of trial, was no longer in Sheol but had

risen from the dead. For Peter and the other disciples it was clear that a resurrection of their own souls from despondency and despair was the supreme need of the hour. They had been dull of understanding; now they were aware of a great missionary function devolving upon them. They had fled from his cross; now they were strong and brave to take up their own cross. They had slept in Gethsemane; now they were awake to the new demand made upon them. They had been sheep timidly following the shepherd; now they were ready and eager to be shepherds themselves, anxious to give their lives for the sheep. Thus Christianity is rooted in one of the finest intuitions of the human heart, one that survives all our critical analysis of the New Testament records and all our scientific observations; viz., the more spiritual a human life is, the less can we think of it as perishing. Jesus lived so grandly and gloriously as to have made his disciples certain of his survival of death, certain also of the deathlessness of his cause. The resurrection of courage, faith, loyalty and consecration in the hearts of his disciples transformed them from victims of despair into champions of a deserted cause. Far, then, from being based upon a fiction, or

upon the delusion of two or three women beside themselves with grief, or upon a deliberate imposture, Christianity arose from a great spiritual fact, one from which genuine historical facts followed, the whole constituting the total spiritual starting point of the Christian religion. Briefly and in chronological order, these facts were as follows: First, the recollection of their Master's wonderful personality and influence, as it came to the disciples after they had fled from the garden of Gethsemane. Second, the conviction, arising spontaneously from this recollection, that Jesus could not be still in Sheol, but must have risen, a conviction which was corroborated for the disciples by appeal to prophecy, history and the psalms. Third, the transformation, produced by this conviction, of cowardly disciples into heroic heralds of the belief that Jesus was alive and would soon return from heaven to complete his mission. Fourth, physical "appearances" of Jesus to Peter and the other disciples, superinduced by the three preceding facts and giving rise to the familiar legends of a physical resurrection reported in the Gospels. But what we have to note concerning the disciples is that on returning to Jerusalem they made preparation not for

carrying on the mission of Jesus, but instead prepared for his expected reappearance from heaven as the Messiah and for the judgment upon a sinful world that was to follow his advent. The time was very near at hand, they thought, when a divine judgment would be visited upon the heathen, when the sheep of Israel would be separated from the goats and the Kingdom of God ushered in by Messiah-Jesus. Whether or not Jesus ever regarded himself as ordained to fulfill any such politico-social function is still a debated question. But that the apostles (and after them Paul) firmly believed in such a Messiahship of Jesus, there can be no question whatsoever. Gospels and Epistles alike are fairly saturated with the great expectation of the speedy return of Jesus as Messiah to inaugurate the new era. And so we find the disciples of Jesus on their return to Jerusalem devoting themselves not to promulgating the gospel of Jesus, with its stress on the new morality of the spirit, but rather to persuading their disbelieving Jewish brethren that Jesus was in truth the Messiah and that his death on the cross, far from being, as they thought, God's punishment inflicted upon an impostor, was a divinely-ordained means of salva-

tion, *supplemental,* in its saving efficacy, to the Law. No, the work undertaken by the disciples was not a continuation of the ministry of Jesus, not a reaffirmation of his message, but the preaching of a world-Messianic gospel (*a*) acceptance of Jesus as the Messiah, (*b*) the necessity of preparedness for entrance into his kingdom and (*c*) escape from "the wrath to come." From this theological departure, initiated by the disciples of Jesus, we can trace the centuries of controversy during which attention was concentrated on beliefs *about* Jesus rather than upon his character, influence and message.

Aside from this belief in Jesus as the Messiah and in the crucifixion as a *supplemental* means of salvation, the disciples were in every respect Jews, as in the days when their Master was still among them. For we are told in the book of Acts (our ultimate source of information concerning the disciples), that, like all other loyal Jews, they attended the temple services, observed the fasts and feasts of Judaism, acknowledged the supreme authority of the Law (the *Torah*), and, as such, believed in circumcision and in "kosher" meat. They spoke of themselves as "the seed of Abraham," "the people of God," while those Jews who refused to accept

Jesus as Messiah they designated "the synagogue of Satan." They styled themselves *"believers"* because they held to belief in the Messiahship of Jesus. They called themselves *"the church"* (ecclesia) because this term, the equivalent of the Hebrew *Kāhāl,* expressed the idea of a community called of God or the people in their relations to God with whom a "covenant" had been made. In short, the disciples who convened in Jerusalem after the crucifixion had no thought whatever of relinquishing their relation to the mother-church. They were Jews, differing from all other Jews only in their view of the crucifixion and in their belief that Jesus was the Messiah, soon to prove himself such by returning from heaven to usher in the expected heavenly kingdom. All Jews believed in the coming of a Messiah but none except the disciples and their followers believed that Jesus was he. They were thus heterodox Jews holding this belief along with their inherited Judaism. By birth, education and confession they were Jews and remained such throughout their life. Their belief in Jesus as the Messiah and their view of his death as a means of salvation supplemental to the Law made them a sect of Judaism, i.e., a part of the parent religion, cut off from all the

rest to live for itself and convert all the rest into material for its own growth. Just as the Shiites, for example, became a sect of Mohammedanism, or the Baptists a sect of Christianity, each retaining connection with the main body from which it sprang, but standing for one or more *distinctive* beliefs, so these Messianists were a sect of Judaism, holding two particular beliefs peculiar to themselves, but in all other respects representatives of Judaism. In other words, the disciples of Jesus *did not break with Judaism* and had no thought whatsoever of constituting themselves an independent religious body. Rather was it their supreme purpose to stay within the ranks of the mother-faith while striving to convert their fellow Jews to acceptance of Jesus as the Messiah.

Clearly, then, it is a mistake to speak of these disciples as "the first Christians"—a common practice with many writers on the subject. For, as yet, there was no Christianity. Jesus had lived and died a Jew, with no thought of originating a successor to Judaism, a fact to which we shall return in the next chapter. Not even the name Christian had as yet come into existence and would not for another fifteen years, the designation having been first used, in the

year 47, at Antioch, in Syria (and as a nickname), by non-Jewish residents to describe the local followers of the Apostle Paul. Not aware of the fact that "Christ," the Greek equivalent for "Messiah," is the title of an office, not the name of a man, the local Gentiles coined the word "Christian" to describe the adherents of Paul's views. If, then, we are to speak accurately and avoid confusion of ideas in our effort to trace the actual development of Christianity from Judaism, we must call these disciples *predecessors* of the first Christians, seeing that they had not broken with Judaism, and were merely a Jewish sect distinguished from their fellow Jews by their view of the crucifixion and by their belief in the Messiahship of Jesus. In the book of Acts they are nicknamed "Nazarenes." We might with propriety call them *Messianists* by reason of the chief belief that differentiated them from their brethren in Judaism. It was out of this sect of the Messianists that a new type of religion was eventually evolved, to be known as Christianity, for its adherents promptly accepted as a badge of honor the name originally affixed to them derisively by disbelievers. No one in the ranks of the Messianists had caught the idea of the *superfluity* of the Law

as a means of salvation if the death of Jesus were adequate to that end. Before the further step could be taken away from this dualism, to acceptance of Jesus' sacrifice alone, before the break with Judaism could be made complete and Christianity supersede Messianism, some one had to see that the crucifixion was an *all-sufficing* means of salvation, dispensing with the need of further devotion to the prescriptions of Jewish ceremonialism, even with circumcision and "kosher." And he who grasped the logic of the situation, who saw the inconsistency of reliance on any means of salvation other than belief in the efficacy of Jesus' death, was originally a representative of Judaism, then a convert to Messianism, a young Greek Jew born in Tarsus about the year 2 B. C. *Saul* was his name, but later in life it was changed to *Paul,* the change indicative of the change of belief that enabled him to become the apostle to the Gentiles. As such the Gentile (Roman) name was more fitting than the Hebrew name Saul.

Tarsus was a university town situated in Cilicia, a province of Asia Minor. It was the birthplace of several stoic philosophers and of the poet Aratus whom Paul quoted in his speech on Mars' Hill. Tarsus, moreover, was noted for

the manufacture of a coarse, dark sail-cloth, made from the hair of the Cilician goat and used for making sailor's clothes, sails and tents.[1] Here Paul learned the tent-making trade, in accordance with the Jewish Law which required every boy to learn a trade. And though he became a missionary preacher, the acquisition of this practical training proved, as he tells us,[2] most serviceable when without other means of livelihood. In the autobiographical portion of his letter to the Galatians we are told that he had been privileged to study in Jerusalem, under the distinguished Gamaliel, grandson of the famous Hillel and himself a doctor of the Law and exceptionally versed in rabbinical lore as well as in the subtleties of scriptural interpretation. Just what the duration of this tutelage under Gamaliel was we do not know, but it is certain that it did not include the week of Jesus' ministry in Jerusalem, because, in that case Paul would have seen Jesus, whereas he expressly declared he had never seen Jesus except in a vision.[3] In the Apocryphal book, known as *The Acts of Paul and Tecla,* Paul is described as

[1] Acts xvii. 28.

[2] 1 Corinthians iv. 12.

[3] 1 Corinthians ix. 1, xv. 8; Acts xxvi. 15.

small of stature, bald-headed, hollow-eyed, his nose somewhat aquiline, his facial expression "full of grace," a description upon which the traditional portraits of Paul, in medieval and renaissance art were based. From his father, Paul inherited the privilege of Roman citizenship, a civil right which proved of great practical value to him toward the end of his life, permitting him on the occasion of his arrest and imprisonment to carry his case to the emperor at Rome.[4] He was there in the year 64 when Nero accused the Christians of having set fire to the imperial city, and in all probability he was one of the victims of the Neronian persecution.

But not to digress further from the subject that now concerns us, let us proceed to trace the steps whereby the transition from Messianism to Christianity was effected. The book of Acts records the story of the bitter persecution conducted by Jewish disbelievers in the Messiahship of Jesus against those who entertained this doctrine. One of these Messianists, a young Greek convert, Stephen by name, had just been stoned to death for alleged blasphemy in the course of a great missionary speech.[5] It is here,

[4] Acts xxviii. 19.

[5] Acts vii. 2 to viii. 1.

at the execution of Stephen, that we first meet with Paul. He acts as custodian of the coats of those who participated in the stoning of the martyr. He was utterly out of sympathy with the Messianist position. He styled himself "a Hebrew of the Hebrews," meaning that he was of pure Hebrew descent. He called himself "a Pharisee of the Pharisees," meaning that he was exceedingly scrupulous to observe every requirement of the Jewish Law, all the more so because of the laxness among his Greek coreligionists in Tarsus. So bitter was his antagonism to these Messianists that when, following Stephen's death, the violent persecution already referred to was instituted, Paul asked permission of the high priest to go to Damascus, whither many of the heretics had fled, and bring them back to Jerusalem for trial.[6]

The commission was readily granted him for he had shown himself to be a dauntless champion of the religion of Israel, a fearless foe of innovators upon the faith of the fathers. In his zeal for Judaism he had hounded the Messianists and "made havoc" of their community,

[6] Acts ix. 1-2.

going so far as to enter private houses and drag forth inmates suspected of believing Jesus to be the Messiah.[7]

But on the way north, as he was nearing Damascus, this violent persecutor had a psychical experience which transformed him into a supreme champion of the doctrine he had determined to exterminate. Three different accounts of this experience have been recorded in the book of Acts; the first, a part of the historical narrative of the book; the other two, parts of addresses delivered by Paul to the people of Jerusalem.[8] Common to all three accounts is the seeing by Paul of a light in the sky, and from out the light the hearing of a voice, saying: "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" And Saul said, "Who art thou, Lord?" To which the voice replied: "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest; it is hard for thee to kick against the goad." Whereupon, we are told, the persecutor became blind and remained so for three days, his friends who were with him, but "*who saw nothing*" leading him into the city. Readers of Professor Wm. James' *Varieties of Re-*

[7] Galatians i. 13.

[8] Acts ix. 3-19; xxii. 3 foll.; xxvi. 9 foll.

ligious Experience will know that the credibility of this psychical experience is fully attested by data from the field of psychology. Never has it been a strange thing for people to see a light or to hear a voice and thereupon experience a change of heart or of religious belief. Nay more, by consulting Paul's letters to the Corinthians and the one written to the Galatians, we are enabled to account for the transforming experience in terms of the following four facts:[9] (1) The nervous temperament of Paul, his addiction to visions, trances, revelations.[10] (2) The memory of the martyr Stephen facing death so serenely, with such utter composure of mind and heart. Could it be that there was truth in the conviction he stood for and died for, the Messiahship of Jesus? Were these "Nazarenes" after all right in thinking that the crucifixion of Jesus, far from being a punishment for blasphemy and imposture, was a propitiation for Israel's sins? (3) The long journey of one hundred and thirty-six miles from Jerusalem to Damascus afforded ample opportunity for reflection upon these points. (4) The Greek

[9] For a fuller discussion of this see my *Dawn of Christianity*, pp. 117-119.

[10] Corinthians xii. 1-4.

proverb, "It is hard for thee to kick against the goad," reveals the kind of ideas that were at work in Paul's mind and calculated to culminate in the "vision" and his conversion to Messianism. The proverb relates to a practice of plowmen still in vogue in oriental countries. As the farmer drove his ox, he held the plow by the right hand and, in his left, a sharp pointed stick to goad the ox on. And when he pricked the animal rather severely it "kicked against the goad." Applied to Paul's experience the proverb suggests that it was exceedingly difficult for him to suppress (kick against) the haunting suspicion (goad) that Stephen and his fellow-Messianists were right. But as it became increasingly difficult for Paul to dispel this haunting belief, "to kick against the goad," he at last abandoned the effort entirely. Thus the erstwhile persecutor became the foremost defender and champion of the belief he had opposed, the intense inner conflict culminating in the episode thrice related in the book of Acts. Thus this man of neurotic temperament, of impetuous action, governed oftener by impulse than by reasoned conviction, went over to Messianism, joining the ranks of those who accepted Jesus as the Messiah, who looked upon his sac-

rifice as a means of salvation, *second* only to that of obedience to the Jewish Law and who held with adamantine inflexibility to circumcision and "kosher" as the very badge of Judaism and the two heretical views of the Messiahship of Jesus and of his crucifixion as only a *supplementary* medium of salvation

Having thus taken the step from Judaism to Messianism why did not Paul remain in the latter fellowship? What caused him eventually to renounce allegiance to the position of Peter and the other members of the Messianist community at Jerusalem? Evidently during his years of residence in the outskirts of Damascus, following the psychical experience on the way thither, Paul had ample opportunity for reflection upon that experience and for a deeper understanding of what was involved in his conversion from Judaism to Messianism. Unfortunately the New Testament furnishes us no particulars as to the process of theological thinking which carried him beyond the pale of Messianism to the founding of an essentially new religion. But once outside its boundaries the reasons for adoption of the new faith are fully and clearly set forth, more especially in his letters to the Romans, the Galatians and the Corinthians.

From a study of these it is clear that Paul had perceived the incongruity and inconsistency of holding to *both* the Law and the crucifixion as media of salvation.[11] Prior to his conversion to Messianism he had interpreted the death of Jesus on the cross just as every other Jew had construed it, viz., as the merited penalty visited by an angered God upon an impostor and blasphemer. For Paul, as for all other Jews, a crucified Messiah was a contradiction in terms. But now, as a result of the psychical experience on the way to Damascus and further reflection during the three years following it, Paul saw in the crucifixion a "divinely ordained means whereby all who had become estranged from God could be brought again into at-one-ment with Him. Had not the exilian Isaiah propounded the doctrine of vicarious suffering in his explanation of the suffering servant of Yahweh," the righteous remnant of Israel, they who had suffered exile despite their righteousness? And had not the disciples interpreted Isaiah's personification of this saving remnant as referring to Jesus, and was not their interpretation consistent with the Levitical legislation which called for "the shedding of blood"

[11] Galatians ii. 11-21.

as the necessary prerequisite for regaining lost at-one-ment with God? How natural then was the conclusion that in the shedding of Jesus' blood on the cross the requirements of the Jewish Law had been met; [12] that in place of the sacrificial lamb, slain as an offering to Yahweh that his anger might be removed and the sinful soul redeemed, Jesus, the Lamb of God, had been offered and his blood shed for the remission of sins. According to Hebrew belief, formulated in the book of Leviticus, every sin must be expiated by sacrifice, if not by the sinner, then vicariously, by another. And the more exalted the character of the vicarious expiator the more efficacious the sacrifice to remove the wrath of God and secure salvation unto the sinner. The death of Jesus, therefore, was not for any alleged sin of his own, but for the sins of others to save them from "the wrath to come." Here then, in the crucifixion of Jesus was God's free gift of salvation for all who believe in the atoning efficacy of the blood-sacrifice on the cross. It follows, therefore, that since Jesus, out of love for sinful men, had in obedience to God and in full compliance with the requirement of Levitical legislation, expiated the sins of all believers

[12] Leviticus vi, xvii. 11; Hebrews ix. 22.

in his sacrifice, the Jewish Law as a means of salvation has been superseded. Paul never doubted its divine origin or its service in the religious evolution of Israel, but so far as the old time ceremonialism enjoined by the Law are concerned, these, he thought, should now be abrogated, seeing that the supreme sacrifice of history had been made, annulling the need of all other sacrifices. What further need of a lamb, or of oil, or of grain, or of circumcision, or "kosher," when the sacrifice on the cross sufficed to atone for the sins of the believers in that sacrifice?

When, in the Messianist community established at Antioch in Syria (to which Paul was called as leader in 44), visiting brethren from the Messianist community at Jerusalem observed Jews and Gentiles sitting together at table and eating the same food (in flippant violation of the Levitical law), the Gentiles, moreover, having been admitted to membership without first being circumcised, then it was that a crisis in the evolution of Christianity occurred. Had the movement away from Judaism stopped at the dual devotion to the Law and to the crucifixion as means of salvation, the latter supplemental to the former, there would have been no

Christianity, and no successful appeal to the Gentile world. What cared the Gentiles for the Law? But when Paul abandoned this dual devotion to rely solely on the sacrifice of Jesus as the means of salvation, the way was prepared for successful conversion in the Gentile field. To no other representative of Messianism had it occurred that if the sacrifice of Jesus was in itself adequate to the salvation of all who accepted it, then all further devotion to the ordinances of Pentateuchal legislation could be dispensed with. To insist on continued compliance with the requirements of the Law as a means of salvation seemed to Paul absurd. If that be still insisted upon "then has Christ died in vain." Such was his answer to Peter, representing the Messianists at Jerusalem, on the occasion of the latter's visit to the missionary outpost at Antioch of which Paul had taken charge. For him the crucifixion was seen to be meaningless if allegiance to Jewish ceremonialism were still insisted upon as a means of salvation. But to Peter the idea was strange and forbidding because he had never thought out the logic of his belief in Jesus' death and because, conservative that he was, he could not think that God had opened a new door of sal-

vation other than the Jewish Law. Paul, on the other hand, was a trained thinker and as such saw the illogical position which the Messianists had taken and forthwith abandoned it, thereby laying the foundation of a new religion, remedial in essence and centered in the "crucified and risen Christ." From what has been thus far said it is plain that however much Paul may have known of the life and teaching of Jesus his concern was exclusively with the problem of salvation from "the wrath to come." And this explains the distinctively *redemptive* character of Christianity. But his preoccupation with the problem of salvation is not wholly accounted for in terms of the psychical experience on the road to Damascus and the conversion from Judaism to Messianism that followed. We must take cognizance also of his confession of a great spiritual struggle that produced in him the sense of utter moral impotency. That confession as recorded in the seventh chapter of his letter to the Romans is a singularly self-revealing bit of autobiography. Evidently the difficulty of conforming to the requirements of the Law was not confined to its ceremonial injunctions but included also its moral commandments. That he should have felt the sense of

failure touching compliance with all the rules and regulations of ceremonial Law is not to be wondered at. For the Pentateuchal legislation had been considerably amplified by Talmudic ordinances, the whole constituting for Paul an intolerable burden and bondage albeit, as he said, that God had imposed it on the people of Israel to sustain in them the sense of sin. But just wherein Paul's defection from the moral commandments of the Law lay, we are wholly at a loss to know. We are told only of his profound, agonizing consciousness of shortcomings, a spiritual suffering not to be compared with any form of physical pain. Assuredly there is no bodily suffering comparable to the pangs of a conscience wounded beyond healing; no pain is there like that which comes to a man when he climbs to the heights of his nobler self and looks down in sorrowful contempt upon his baser self. How unspeakably wretched was Paul when he discovered that he had failed to fulfill the law of righteousness. Over against that moral Law stood the evil propensities and dispositions of his lower nature, warring against the higher and bringing him "into captivity to the Law of sin which is in his 'members.'" "The good that I would I do not and the evil I

would not that I do. O wretched man that I am who shall deliver me from this bondage to sin, who can raise me from this death, who endow me with moral power to do the good that I would? To will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not."

Is there then any one equal to the function of lifting him "from his dead self to higher things?" Obviously only one who has succeeded where he failed, only one who has actually fulfilled the law of righteousness can meet his need. In all probability during those years of quiet reflection spent in the outskirts of Damascus, Paul reached the conviction that Jesus alone of all men could help him. He, the exceptional, archetypal, celestial man, the second Adam, the Son of God, he who differed from all other men in *kind* as well as in degree, he and only he possessed that superabundant righteousness which, if it could be drawn upon, would enable Paul to solve his problem. But how shall he borrow of this superabundant righteousness and so banish the spiritual wretchedness which spells death in life? This question Paul answered in terms of faith, meaning thereby not something synonymous with belief, not any species of intellectual activity, but rather a mystical process in which

all men may engage and in virtue of the practice of which, all are "brethren" and without which salvation is not to be attained. This process consists in fixing one's thought steadily and intensely on the God-man Jesus to the exclusion of every other interest, and by thus gazing steadfastly and intently upon him, having the air one breathes surcharged with the sense of his presence, becoming at one with him, as with a cloak, letting him function within one's personality so that all one's thoughts, words, deeds are in essence, not one's own, but his.

Paul, educated in the Greek city of Tarsus and having spent most of his life in the Greco-Roman world, laden as it was with mysticism, imparted to the Hebrew idea of faith a mystical meaning which it never had on Palestinian soil and made it fundamental in his religious thinking. Recall the ringing words in which he sets forth to his Galatian converts the mighty change involved in the forward move from Judaism to the new religion, "Before faith came we were kept under the Law, debarred from the faith which should later on be revealed. Wherefore the Law was our pedagogue to bring us unto Christ that we might be justified by faith. But now that faith is come we are no longer under a

pedagogue. For ye all are children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is then neither Jew nor Gentile, bond nor free for ye all are one in Christ."[13] Well enough for the Jews, in the childhood of the race to have had the Law, but now that its manhood has been entered upon, let the Law lead the race to the Master Christ, even as the Hebrew private tutor led the boy under his tutelage to the master of the public school when the lad was old enough to take the forward step in his education. Just as the sons of wealthy Jewish parents were under the supervision of a pedagogue (mistranslated "schoolmaster") who served as a companion and tutor till he was old enough to go to school, so the Law was such a pedagogue to bring us unto Christ, and, once in his presence, all further need of the pedagogue was at an end.[14]

Thus the central idea in Paul's break with Messianism was *faith* even as his earlier break with orthodox Judaism was based on acceptance of the Messiahship of Jesus. The *partial* break with Judaism, achieved by the disciples of

[13] Galatians iii. 23-28.

[14] Galatians iii. 24.

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Jesus when they entered on their work at Jerusalem, was made a *complete* break by Paul when he abrogated allegiance to the Law in favor of allegiance to the crucified and risen Christ as the sole means of salvation and when he substituted for futile attempts to fulfill the law of righteousness, the mystical practice of faith—"putting on the Lord Jesus Christ." Nor can the *distinctive* feature of Christianity as one of the world's great religions be better expressed than in this admonition of Paul to his Galatian converts, "put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ." To be a Christian as distinguished from a Messianist and from a Jew, is to accept that precept and strive to practice it. According to Paul all men are evil and doomed to destruction, but by becoming united with Jesus, the Christ, by faith, they are transformed from corrupt to holy beings, from sinners to saints; they are freed from death and made possessors of eternal life. They are supernatural beings in the sense that they are thus transformed and made superior to and separate from the things of this world, living still in the flesh, to be sure, but waiting and yearning for release from it and entrance upon enjoyment of the true life in a kingdom soon to come. The present order, according to Paul, is essen-

tially evil and salvation for Romans no less than for Jews lay only in escape from it by the power of Christ, operating in the mind and heart and will to bring about that domination of the natural man by the supernatural, in which salvation really consists. The vivid contrasts drawn by Paul between the spirit and the flesh, between divine and human nature, between holiness and sin, between this world and the world soon to come, all conspired to develop in succeeding generations that indifference to amelioration of earthly conditions and absorption in the future which the opponents of Christianity singled out as its most glaring defect. Small wonder that asceticism, to which Paul showed distinct leanings, should have developed into monasticism and that its representatives should have been regarded as exponents of the Christian ideal and the great heroes of the Church.

Christianity then is essentially a redemptive religion. It presupposes the fact of sin, felt both as guilt and as pollution. It offers, as its chief blessing, salvation from sin through an expiation wrought by the God-man Jesus. It gives assurance to the sinner that his acceptance of that expiation is attested by the practice of faith, putting on the Lord Jesus Christ. He is a

Christian who sees in Jesus one, differing from all other human beings in *kind* as well as in *degree,* the God-man empowered to make acceptable unto God every sinner who turned to him in faith. These are the salient elements of Christianity, present in the religion from the start and without which its *distinctive* character becomes lost and it ceases to be Christianity.

Each of the world's great religions has given its answer to the question, what shall I do to be saved? Brahmanism, interpreting salvation as "the cessation of rebirths and absorption in Brahma," the Soul of the universe, answers: Ponder, reflect, meditate on the supreme truth "That art Thou," the individual *Atman* and *Brahma* are one. Buddhism seeing salvation as entrance into *Nirvana,* answers: Grasp the "four noble truths"; walk the "eight-fold path" that leads to release from rebirths. Zoroastrianism, construing salvation as sharing with Ahura Mazda the ultimate victory of the good principle, answers: Be a soldier on the side of Ahura Mazda in the fight against the evil principle and Angro Mainyus. Confucianism, confining its attention to terrestrial welfare answers: Reproduce in all human relations the calm, unbroken, harmonious order of the solar

system. Judaism (of the Old Testament) with no doctrine of a future life, but a fully developed doctrine of rewards and punishments, answers: Fulfill the law of righteousness. Mohammedanism (as we shall see in a subsequent chapter) answers: Submit to the Omnipotent Sultan, Allah, and blissful abode in his heaven will be your portion forever. Christianity (of the New Testament) anticipating the speedy coming of a day of judgment, answers: "Confess your inability to fulfill the law of righteousness, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, the exceptional, archetypal, celestial man; the second Adam, the Son of God, borrow of his superabundant righteousness by practicing faith, by becoming assimilated to him, by reproducing in your own experience his crucifixion and resurrection, letting the death of sin in you become, as it were, a repetition of his death and your rising into the heights of a new life, a repetition of his resurrection—in a word, "put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ."[15]

All that has been said thus far indicates that the founder of Christianity, as distinguished from Judaism, was Paul. Had then Jesus no part in the founding of Christianity or, if he

[15] Romans xiii. 14.

had, wherein did his contribution consist? In what relation does Jesus stand to Christianity? An answer to this question will form the substance of the next chapter.

SCRIPTURE SELECTIONS FROM THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW

(Introductory to Chapter IV)

Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.—v. 43-48.

Then one of them, which was a lawyer, asked him a question, tempting him, and saying: Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.—xxii. 34-40.

Selections from "An Ethical Philosophy of Life." Felix Adler

Seek, and ye shall find. But what exactly is it that we are to seek? What are we to see in the other?—The spiritual nature. But what is the spiritual nature?

The spiritual nature in another is the fair quality

distinctive of the other raised to the nth degree. We are to paint ideal portraits of our spiritual associates. We are to see them in the light of what is better in them as it would be if it were transfigured into the best. We are to go on as long as we live painting these ideal portraits of them. We are to retouch their portraits constantly.

The god in the other, the eternal personality in the inner sanctuary of the other, is the object that must be sought and touched.

It is only when face to face with the god enthroned in the innermost shrine of the other that the god hidden in me will consent to appear.

In every man there is a ray of the eternal light emanating from the eternal luminary, and all men are one in so far as their rays converge at the focus of Godhead.

We must, somehow, learn to regard the odious or vulgar traits as the mask, the screen interposed between our eyes and the real self of others. We must acquire the faculty of second sight, of seeing the lovable self as the true self.

The power of ideally appreciating others, of seeing them in the light of their possible best, and the feeling of love consequent on this vision, is the mightiest lever for transforming evil into good, and for sweetening the embittered lives of men.

Spiritual appreciation, appreciation of the inner self, despite the mask, is the greatest of gifts. It is the art of going down to the lowest of human beings —the man in the ditch, the woman on the street— and making them think well of themselves because of possibilities in their nature they themselves hardly surmise.

CHAPTER IV

THE RELATION OF JESUS TO CHRISTIANITY

The moral discovery that he could not fulfill the law of righteousness, as required by Judaism, generated in the mind of Paul the need of a new means of salvation. The psychical experience on the road to Damascus convinced him that Jesus had risen from the dead and that his crucifixion was divinely ordained to bring sinful men into at-one-ment with God. For Paul, the Jewish answer to the question, What must I do to be saved from "the wrath to come"? had failed to satisfy. The substitute solution he offered marked a distinct departure from Judaism and the inauguration of a new religion, rightly called Christianity because at its core lay (*a*) his conception of the crucifixion as an *all-sufficing* medium of salvation and (*b*) his mystical doctrine of borrowing of the superabundant righteousness of Jesus the Christ by "faith," thereby making possible fulfillment of the law of righteousness.

Christianity thus owed its origin directly to the moral experience of this Greek Jew, for whom the problem of salvation had been opened anew, and in furnishing a fresh solution he started a new religion. But for his two great experiences, the one psychical, the other moral, he would have remained a Messianist and no Christianity would have been born.

Christianity, then, being essentially a redemptive religion, designed to replace the mode of salvation offered by its two immediate predecessors—Messianism and Judaism—and Paul, its originator, in the manner described in the preceding chapter, the question arises, must we not abandon the traditional ascription of its origin to Jesus? Or, was there, perchance, a part played also by him, compelling us to regard Jesus as *joint-founder* with Paul, a rôle of which hitherto we have taken no account?

Paul, it is true, was born four years before Jesus, but his ministry began only at the end of the decade after the death of Jesus. During the period of the Galilean and Judean ministry of Jesus, which lasted, according to the Synoptists, about eighteen months, Paul was in Tarsus, his visit to Jerusalem having oc-

curred the year after the crucifixion. Jesus, then, had no acquaintance with Paul, nor is there anywhere any evidence that he ever heard of him, much less learned anything from him, or ever saw him.

The name "Christian" he never heard, for, as we have seen, it originated twelve or thirteen years after the death of Jesus and then was used as a nickname for the followers of Paul at Antioch, just as the term "Methodists" was derisively applied to the followers of John Wesley, and "Quakers" to those of George Fox.

Nor, again, did Jesus fulfill the office of the Christ from which the name Christian derives. For though his disciples expected to see him coming down from heaven in great glory as "the Christ," or Messiah, from that day to this the heavens have remained silent and the old order of the world has gone on as of yore, the Messianic hope remaining void of fulfillment.

Jesus did not teach that salvation depends upon "belief on the Lord Jesus Christ." Those ill-starred words, once attributed to Jesus, "he that believeth shall be saved and he that believeth not shall be damned,"[1] formed no part of the original record of the Gospel, but were inter-

[1] Mark xvi. 16.

polated at a later day when theology was to the fore and it was desired that this doctrine of salvation be found in the sacred text. When the young man came to Jesus asking "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" he did not reply, "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ" but "keep the commandments," exercise the spirit of helpful service.

There is no doctrine of atonement in the teachings of Jesus. He did not refer to himself as "a sacrifice for sin," but held the established Jewish belief that salvation is a matter of obedience to God's will, every man's own right conduct insuring his at-one-ment with God. The conception of the death of Jesus as a source of self-reconciliation of the sinner to God originated with Paul, who felt the need of a mediator because of his confessed inability to fulfill the law of righteousness. But Jesus had no such sense of moral impotency, albeit he said to the tricky lawyer who had called him "good Master," "Why callest thou me good? There is none good save One." Jesus was strengthened and sustained by the sense of limitless moral possibilities residing in every human soul, thereby warranting the plea "be ye perfect" in your finite measure even as God is

perfect. Paul, on the other hand, was overwhelmed by the sense of moral incapacity to approximate perfection. Everywhere in the teachings of Jesus is the implicit assumption that despite man's proneness to sin, inexhaustible capacity for improvement is a fixed asset of his moral nature. Else why the cry "repent," why the plea "strive to enter in" and the ever-recurring appeal "do the will of your father which is in heaven"? What a contrast between this consciousness of moral power as it was in Jesus and the plaint of Paul; "to *will* is present with me, but *how* to perform that which is good I find not." Hence his despairing cry for a righteousness not his own on which he might draw and be saved.

The belief that man is inherently evil and his one hope of redemption the bestowal upon him of a supernatural "grace," the belief that the Church is a door through which all must pass who would enjoy union with God and Christ, these typically Christian beliefs originated in the gospel according to Paul and can in no wise be traced to Jesus. Similarly, those religious practices that are peculiarly Christian—*prayer* in the name of Jesus Christ, *worship* of the God-man, *baptism* and the *Lord's Supper* as

sacraments or visible signs of an invisible grace—these, too, had their genesis, not in Jesus, but in Paul. He held that no one could come into at-one-ment with God except through Christ.[2] He converted the simple common meal of the Brethren—the "agape," or love-feast of remembrance of Jesus—into a sacrament by connecting it with his doctrine of redemption.[3]

Prior to the public appearance of Paul the disciples and their followers had been satisfied with a very simple ceremonialism and quite a democratic form of worship. Whosoever felt moved to lead in prayer or in the reading from the Law, or the Prophets, did so freely. And the reason for this simplicity and democracy is to be found in the intense enthusiasm that characterized the religious life of the disciples in that first decade following the death of Jesus. The fervid, even feverish, anticipation of Jesus' return from heaven at any moment to fulfill the function of Messiah and the glowing thought of the transfigured social order that would then be established, these combined to sustain a perfervid enthusiasm that would of necessity be impatient with elaborate ritualism and preten-

[2] Romans vi.

[3] I Corinthians x-xi.

tious ecclesiasticism. And only when that spiritual feverishness began to cool and wane did there arise the desire for more ceremonialism and ecclesiastical rule. Hitherto there had been no such institution as the clergy, nor was there any formal test of fellowship applied to applicants for admission to the Messianist community. All who were enthusiastic for Messiah-Jesus and who sought to live in his spirit and do his bidding were, *ipso facto,* admitted. Baptism, too, at this time was only a symbol of fitness for fellowship in the kingdom so soon to come,[4] and the "Lord's Supper" was but a commemorative meal.[5] But with the decline of enthusiasm the former became an instrument for separating Jews from believers in the Messiahship of Jesus and a pledge of confession thereof, and the latter, too, became a sacrament.

Again, in the matter of organization, a community living in hourly expectation of the advent of Messiah will be indifferent to government regulations, or at least content with a minimum of ecclesiasticism. But let hope of "the coming of the Lord" die out and there rises at once the sense of need for organization, and

[4] Acts ii. 40, 41.

[5] Acts ii. 42.

the beginnings of an ecclesiastical hierarchy are in sight.

Jesus knew no "sacrament," he baptized no one. Far from setting up a "eucharist," he simply requested his disciples to keep him in remembrance at the common meal. Had no early Christian literature been transmitted other than the teachings of Jesus, we should never have known of these doctrines and practices that had their source in the preaching of Paul. It is impossible for any one to fail to note the difference, both in form and in content, between the Sermon on the Mount and the Epistles of the apostle Paul. The former is the promulgation of a new law of conduct—it assumes beliefs rather than formulates them; the theological ideas underlying it belong to the ethical, not the speculative side of theology; metaphysics are wholly absent from it. The Epistles, on the other hand, are essentially doctrinal, argumentative and concerned with a theory of salvation. Ethics has a quite subordinate place in them and their theological conclusions, logically worked out by rabbinical reasoning, would have been unintelligible to the multitudes that gathered to hear Jesus. The one belongs to a world of untutored peasants,

the other to a world of trained thinkers. The contrast is patent on every page. Plainly enough, *Jesus was not a Christian,* having known nothing whatever of those beliefs which Paul had painfully elaborated in his passionate search for "a way unto salvation." For him there was no alternative but to break with his ancestral faith when the crucified Christ became, for him, the *sole* means of salvation. But Jesus had no occasion to depart from the faith of his fathers. The Jewish mode of securing salvation was sufficient unto his spiritual need, and so he lived and died a loyal Jew, his conscience in no degree disturbed by what the temple services required, the fasts and feasts of Judaism faithfully observed with no disposition whatever to repudiate them.[6] Enough for him that he could preach the moral reforms that his insight had grasped, conscious of no simultaneous necessity for renouncing the affiliations he cherished. Nor, again, was he content to be a mere iconoclast; rather would he be a constructive reformer with a positive message, aiming to reveal the deeper meanings of the ancient moral code, to bring to light latent implications of the primary commandments,

[6] Mark xiv. 12; Matthew xxii. 2.

more especially those relating to murder, adultery and the attitude to be taken toward enemies. Far from being conscious of any need to renounce the religion of Israel, he saw that he could consistently remain within the fold and yet endeavor to free that religion from its narrow provincialism, its excessive ceremonialism, its slavish traditionalism.

Nowhere in the Gospels is there an authentic utterance of Jesus to the effect that he desired to institute a new type of religious organization. Only one passage there is that would seem to give warrant for the belief that Jesus broke with the faith of his fathers and sought to set up a new religious institution in its stead. I refer to the sixteenth chapter of the Gospel according to Matthew, where it is written: "Thou art Peter and upon this rock will I build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Without entering upon a detailed discussion of this famous passage,[7] let it suffice merely to note that it appears *only* in this gospel, which, more than either of the other two of the Synoptic gospels, reflects the eccle-

[7] See more especially vv. 15-17, which indicate the existence of an ecclesiastical hierarchy.

siastical conditions of a later day.[8] Furthermore, the use of the word "church" in its *specific* sense as the *ecclesia,* or assemblage of the Lord, dates only from the year 34, when the primitive community of Jerusalem felt itself a people within a people, the true children of the covenant. Prior to this time the term church was used only in the *generic* sense familiar to all Jews, viz., the *Kāhāl,* or congregation of Israel, the people in their relation to God, as under a covenant or contract. Not until Paul had broken with Judaism and launched his new theory of salvation did the word church take on the signification given it in the Matthean gospel, a meaning, forsooth, wholly foreign to the thought of Jesus. In short, the context of this famous passage as well as other evidence from the Synoptics compels our discrediting it as a genuine utterance of Jesus and regarding it instead as an interpolation, incorporated into the Gospel of Matthew about the year 150, when the growing pretensions of the bishop at Rome sought the sanction of Jesus for his Petrine claims.

[8] See my *Dawn of Christianity,* pp. 53-56, for a full discussion of it.

But wholly apart from the foregoing considerations, why should Jesus wish to establish a new religious institution seeing that, within his own generation, the world would come to an end and all further need of organizations cease? The one thing he thought needful above all else was moral preparedness for entrance into the new order of society, the Kingdom of God on earth, which was to replace the then existing order. For Jesus, in conjunction with all his Jewish contemporaries in Palestine, undoubtedly entertained this belief. Indeed, the entire New Testament is saturated with the thought of the great expectation.[9] From the first epistle to the Thessalonians, earliest of the New Testament writings, to the second epistle of Peter, latest of them all, the reader finds every author agitated over the coming of the Kingdom, each describing its advent in more or less figurative language, aglow with intense emotion. John the Baptist has for the burden of his gospel the necessity for instant repentance because "the time is short" till the coming of the Kingdom when no one unfit for membership can escape "the wrath to come." Jesus, following

[9] For a full discussion of this eschatology see my *Dawn of Christianity*, pp. 88-97.

in the wake of John's ministry, supplements his general statement with precise predictions of the time and signs of the Kingdom's advent.[10] The end will come, according to Jesus, before the generation to which he belonged has died out. Persons there are, he said, standing before him who "would not taste death" till they had seen the advent.[11] To his disciples Jesus declared that they would not have time to complete their missionary circuit in the cities of Israel before the end will come.[12] Elsewhere he foretells the events that will signalize the great transformation of the world, while the "little Apocalypse," as it is called, a document incorporated in the Markan gospel and comprising the greater part of the thirteenth chapter, pictures in impressionist style the "signs" wherewith, according to Jesus, the great catastrophe will be heralded. Let there be no mistaking the plain, unidealized terrestrial references in each of these Synoptic passages. Jesus, according to the record, believed, like all other Jews of his time and place, that God would shortly, by a miracle, and at the hands of his

[10] Mark i. 14; Matthew xxiv. 34; Mark xiii. 30; Luke xxi. 32.

[11] Mark ix. 1.

[12] Mark x. 33.

Messiah, bring the world to an end, and establish the kingdom of heaven in its place as the absolute ideal social state. To Jesus the phrase "Kingdom of God" meant this transfigured terrestrial society. Crystal clear it is, in the light of the great mass of apocalyptic literature written during the century before Jesus' birth, that he did *not* construe the contemporary hope of his people as imagery or refer to it in an esoteric sense. On the contrary, he embraced the Messianic expectation with full conviction, looking for a literal kingdom presently to be manifested in the manner anticipated by popular thought. Consequently "we must not shrink," as Professor Scott of Union Theological Seminary has said, "from taking his conceptions in all their literal crudeness and realism."[13] Jesus simply fell in with the Jewish tradition that originated with the prophet Amos, who, despite the Assyrian captivity of Israel, predicted a glorious future for the nation, a prediction that marks the germ out of which, in the course of seven centuries, the apocalyptic belief in the coming "Kingdom of God" was evolved. "What we now perceive to have been mere imaginings, possible only in an

[13] *American Journal of Theology*, 1914, p. 227.

unscientific age, appealed to his mind as realities and gave direction to his message."[14] And yet every careful reader of the Gospels knows that Jesus occasionally used the term "Kingdom of God" with a distinctly *ethical* connotation, signifying that inner condition of purity which was the essential prerequisite for admission into the external Kingdom.[15] For him the term meant *both* the coming transfigured social order *and* the moral condition upon which the individual's entrance to it depended. He acquiesced in the traditional eschatological ideas yet he also gave them a new content. Besides the Kingdom conceived as a visible transformation effected by a sudden crisis, Jesus thought of it also as marking a spiritual attainment in which men realized a life of inward communion with God and perfect obedience to his will. He believed the old order of things would disappear and give place to another which would be subject to entirely different laws. Possessed as he was by this belief, he made it his task to prepare men for the Kingdom and to gather about him the nucleus of a new community that should inherit the Kingdom. In so far, then, as

[14] *Ibid.*, p. 228.

[15] Luke xvii. 21.

his outlook was apocalyptic, it was mistaken, but as Dr. Scott observes, "the time has long since passed when it was deemed necessary to claim for him infallible judgment in *all* matters of human knowledge."[16] To-day even conservative theologians admit that his theory of history and of science was subject to the limitations of his age. And this applies also to his expectation of the future. Given the apocalyptic scheme transmitted from the Apocryphal literature, Jesus accepted it without question and the event proved it was delusive. But we do not lose our faith in him or in the permanent worth of his message because it happened to be bound up with transient apocalyptic material. It would therefore be a serious mistake to class Jesus among the purely apocalyptic thinkers. Elements there are in his teaching in no wise related to his eschatology. Hence, the conclusion of Schweitzer that "Jesus belonged to his own time and that his teaching has no significance for modern men," must be set aside as an unwarranted inference from the actual facts. Had Jesus looked merely for the traditional Kingdom, Schweitzer's claim would be valid, indeed. By as much as the teaching of Jesus

[16] *Ibid.*, p. 231.

is not inextricably bound up with the thought of the visible Kingdom and by as much as there are in his teaching elements that have nothing whatever to do with it, the contention of his critic is set at naught. In other words, it behooves us to beware of seeing in eschatology the exclusive key to the moral thinking of Jesus. Furthermore, we cannot fall in with those who hold that Jesus intended to proclaim "only a provisional rule of life," applicable to the brief interval until the Kingdom should be established when new principles of living would supersede his temporary ethics. The advocates of this "interim morality" overlook the fact that the inheritors of the Kingdom, according to Jesus, were to live as children of God. During the imperfect conditions amid which they lived they were to practice the moral principles that would be required for life in the Kingdom to come. The righteousness Jesus preached was that of the Kingdom, and it was to be practiced prior to its advent. Stripping his eschatology of its transient element, we are enabled to construe the "interim" for which the moral teaching of Jesus is valid as connoting the period of endeavor and aspiration that separates the life of man as it is from what it is ultimately to be.

Jesus, then, had no occasion to leave Judaism. His immediate mission, in large measure, was to prepare his people for membership in the Messianic kingdom so soon to be, and to this end he preached a morality that called for a kind of character finer than that which had hitherto been considered the acme of attainment. Goodness had come to mean conformity to the requirements not only of the simple rules of which the Law originally consisted, but also of the elaborate system of legislation set down in the Pentateuch and enlarged upon in the Talmud. Such a system, by its formal character, tended to draw the heart and will away from those inner springs of right action upon which alone the true moral quality of every act depends. To do violence to any rule was to commit a sin, and no distinction being drawn between *kinds* of sin, it was held that "he who offends in one point of the Law, offends in all."[17] As a result Judaism tended to *de*spiritualize life and make morality a garment that might be doffed or donned at will, rather than a maintained habit of the soul, a danger foreseen by the Deuteronomist who, because of it, pleaded passion-

[17] See the clear cut statement of this position in the epistle of James ii. 10.

ately that men should look within and see Yahweh's law written in their own hearts.[18] Jesus took up the ancient plea anew, pointing to the hidden motives behind actions and pleading for concern with these as against mere external compliance with the requirements of a published standard of conduct. His thought was as free as it was sincere, free from the trammels of tradition, free from slavery to ancient authorities, free to develop without the embarrassment of pledged allegiance to Old Testament standards. He respected the authority of Moses, indeed, but did not regard it as either infallible or final, and therefore he dared to differ from Moses. And so it comes about that he is most like Jesus who sometimes differs from him. If you would be like Jesus, then dare to differ from him as he dared to differ from Moses. Be free to follow truth as he was free. 'Tis an impressive index of the freedom of thought which was in Jesus that at every great crisis in his life he proved himself to be a skeptic in the noble, derivative sense of the word. The Greek σκεπτομαι means, "I shade my eyes," in order to look steadfastly at the object of contemplation. The skeptic is one who shades his

[18] Deuteronomy xxx. 11 foll.

eyes from prejudice, predilection, partiality, so that he shall not be misled, fooled, deceived in his eager passion for the truth. Such consecrated doubt was a characteristic of Jesus' thought, the doubt that puts things to the proof and so strengthens faith.

Progressiveness no less than freedom and sincerity was characteristic of his thought. For he held that the ethics of Moses' age was not necessarily sufficient for his own age. He believed that the decalogue did not exhaust the total content of morality. Yet, lest any one should think him a reckless, ruthless iconoclast, he hastened to say, "Think not that I am come to destroy," his essential purpose being to fulfill the Law, to probe its deeper meanings and bring them to light. "Ye have heard that it hath been said by them of olden times," quoting from the ten commandments, "thou shalt do no murder." "But," continued Jesus, "I say unto you that whosoever is [as much as] angry with his brother shall be in danger of the judgment [the wrath to come]." In other words, it is not enough to obey the sixth commandment, not enough to fulfill the law against committing murder, you must go down in your heart to the source of murder, which is angry passion, that

it may be utterly consumed and provocation to murder be made impossible. Similarly he contended that it is not enough to refrain from the adulterous act, you must go down to the source of it, in the evil desires of the heart. Purify the inner springs of conduct, be not satisfied with mere avoidance of evil deeds. Go down below the killing to the wrath, below the adultery to the lust. The self-same genius which penetrates, interprets, reveals, appears again in his dealing with the problem of evil in the form of oppression. How shall a people behave toward the intolerable fact of oppression while anticipating the end of the social order in which that evil persists? Jesus solved the problem in the precept, "Resist not evil," singling out three forms of oppression—a blow in the face, the taking of one's coat, coercion to do the arbitrary bidding of another, to walk a mile when one has no inclination to walk at all. To the victims of such oppression Jesus said there is a way in which you can spiritually triumph over the evil-doer. Make the oppression he practices a means of self-purification. Let his evil treatment of you cause you to expel from your own heart the evil which, in some measure, is also in you.

If the Sermon on the Mount, from which

these precepts are taken, be likened to a casket and the teachings it contains to precious jewels, then is the maxim, "Love your enemies," the pearl of great price. To make his meaning perfectly plain Jesus contrasts his teachings once more with that of the older Jewish dispensation. This time he does not quote a particular passage from the Old Testament, but simply calls attention to the spirit of hatred toward all foreigners which marks the literature of ancient Israel. Love of *personal* enemies had been inculcated, indeed, but hatred of the heathen and of heretics was assumed, endorsed and practiced.[19] And the contention of Jesus is, don't be satisfied with the self-mastery that conquers hatred of a fellow countryman, but extend that mastery till your love becomes as cosmopolitan and universal as God's love. Hence his use of the simile of the sunshine and the rain bestowed upon the land of the just and the unjust. Behold how impartial is the Divine bounty! See how the sun nurtures and the rain moistens the soil of sinner and saint, of heathen, and Jew, of believer and unbeliever! Imitate the Divine example; let your love be as unrestrained, as impartial, as free, for heathen

[19] See Isaiah xxxiv. 45; Jeremiah l. 51; Psalms cxxxix. 21-22.

(Roman) oppressors and worshipers of idols; out of sheer love for them, pray for them. Jesus told the parable of the good Samaritan to illustrate this new gospel of love. 'Tis but a superficial reading of his message that draws from the parable the lesson that every one who needs us is our neighbor. For Jesus surely intended to cover a deeper truth, viz., that the despised Samaritan, representing the very dregs of Jewish society and a religious outcast, showed himself neighbor to the wounded traveler, and, in consequence, deserved to be regarded as a neighbor by the aristocratic priest and Levite who stood two strata higher in the social scale. What stranger fact is there in Christian history than that, despite this noblest precept of Jesus, Christians have felt at liberty to hate Jews, English Christians to hate German Christians, and German Christians, English. All have nominally accepted Jesus' precept, but, in actual practice, they have evaded it and found all manner of excuses for their evasion.

The redeeming power of a great spiritual love —that is the supreme message in the gospel of Jesus for our age even as it was for his. If we are fine enough, have enough of the heart-

culture that was in Jesus, if our love be strong enough, deep enough, wise enough, patient enough, then no human soul, however degraded, can be beyond the reach of that redeeming love. There is in truth a kind of love that we can feel even toward our enemy. 'Tis the love that would serve him by trying to free him from that which has made him an enemy. 'Tis the love that has sufficient self-control and humility to ask, Whose fault is it that we are enemies? If mine, why should I hate him? If his, because he has misunderstood my act or motive, why hate him? If his, because he has done something which shows him to be morally depraved, why not make allowance for heredity, environment and bad training and try to be his moral helper? Why not pity his moral deformity even as we pity those who are physically deformed?

In his presentation of what we have called the morality of the spirit and in his doctrine of nonresistance and love for enemies, Jesus exhibited what must be regarded as genuinely new ethical insights. Nowhere is his originality more evidenced than here. Grant with the scholarly Rabbi Hirsch that Jesus uttered no maxims the words of which cannot be found in the Talmud or Apocrypha or Old Testament,

grant also that his similes are "indigenous to the Midrash," grant that in neither of these respects Jesus has any claim to originality, the fact still remains that he was the first to vitalize the maxims and similes by the persuasiveness of his presentation of them. In what contemporary or earlier Jewish literature can one parallel the spirit and power that pervade the central portion of the Sermon on the Mount? (Matthew v. 27-48). As it is the transcendent merit of the tree that it derives from the surrounding air, earth, and water the materials wherewith to build the strength of its trunk and the beauty of its foliage, so was it the transcendent merit of Jesus that he drew from earlier and contemporary sources the materials wherewith to make his gospel a source of strength and inspiration, and yet give to them the stamp of original spiritual genius. Nor, in this connection, must we overlook the spiritual conception of man on which his injunction to love our enemies was based. For this conception is the crowning contribution of his gospel and the self-same originality appears in his exposition of it. For him, every human being, however low or degraded, had something sacred attaching to him because of the moral nature in

him and the latent potentialities it enshrines. In each person he saw the lineaments of the Divine, if not plainly in sight, then he discerned them behind the unsuggestive exterior. Hence to love another means, according to Jesus, to act toward him as one who, however evil his overt acts, yet has hidden within him a potential divine humanity; as one who is a fellow-participant of the Eternal Light, there being "in every man a ray of the Eternal Light emanating from the Eternal luminary and all men are one in so far as their rays converge at the focus of Godhead."[20] To love the good, the noble, the refined, is not difficult, but to love the not good, the ignoble, the vulgar; to pierce their surface and reach down to hidden possibilities of exalted character, ah, that is so difficult that we call it divine. Why was it intolerable to Jesus that the poor and oppressed should suffer as they did? Because he took not merely the *sentimental* view of their hardships and handicaps, but also the *moral* view, i. e., he saw them as moral beings endowed with unsuspected potentialities, and hence it was horrible to him that they should be thus degraded. Whether in the private circle of his immediate disciples, or in

[20] See above.

the public gathering of multitudes, or on the cross, Jesus had this power of "ideally appreciating others, seeing them in the light of their possible best," and it proved to be his "mightiest lever for transforming evil into good." According to the Gospel of Mark, the first man Jesus invited to his house was Levi, the publican, an oppressor, an exacter of exorbitant taxes from the poor, as agent of the Roman government. But Jesus saw a veiled figure behind the forbidding exterior of the man, his potential selfhood; and just because the man could give only a very poor account of himself, Jesus could not believe it to be a complete account, but sensed something better than what the man showed. And the story ends with the statement that Jesus found what he suspected, the germ, the ineradicable germ, of a nobler life. Like an April shower that refreshes the parched earth and perfumes the spring air, so this "second sight" of Jesus, this power of seeing people not as they actually are, but as they would be were they to reveal their latent potentialities, penetrated a spiritually darkened world, vainly seeking a guiding light that would give meaning and inspiration to daily life. The aged Simeon, according to the gospel of Luke, as he stood in

the temple a few days after the birth of Jesus, holding the infant in his arms, prophesied that "he shall bring out the secret aims of many hearts." In other words, he declared that people who should turn to Jesus would have revealed to them not only the thoughts that were in his heart, but also the inmost aims of their own hearts. "The gift of the Christmas child to many a life," thought Simeon, "would be an unanticipated disclosure of spiritual possibilities such as one had never dreamed were there." [21] And how singularly the prophecy came to be fulfilled as one after another of the people of the gospels come into the presence of Jesus and have their hidden powers revealed to them. Peter, for instance, the sturdy fisherman, comes and behind all his impetuosity and instability Jesus sees an undiscovered capacity for leadership and loyalty, until at last he becomes the chief personality in the community at Jerusalem. And Judas comes, with his "kiss of betrayal," but deeper than his treachery was a remorse disclosed to him by the influence of his Master. The woman of Samaria comes, to find herself touched with a wonder she never im-

[21] I am indebted to a recent "Christmas Sermon" by Professor F. G. Peabody for these allusions to Simeon.

agined she could feel; and then "the woman who was a sinner" comes and has revealed to her a virtue and power she thought had gone out of her forever. One after another they come, out of the shadow into the penetrating ray of Jesus' personality and in shining through them he reveals their inmost self and they pass on with the sense of an illumination given to their obscure and insignificant lives. For, he had pointed to unutilized strength, or unlocked a neglected casket of service-power, or brought forth resources of action never yet drawn upon —like an untouched and unsuspected balance in the bank of character. He had "convinced men of their capacity after convicting them of their mistakes," found them conscious of weakness and made them believe that they were strong, the secret aims of their hearts having been thus revealed. They might perchance be confronted with a great sorrow, as with the onslaught of an overwhelming frontal attack, but quickly they would find, emerging from behind the lines of consciousness, a capacity for endurance and work, "like reserves in the rear, waiting to meet the enemy just when the battle seemed lost."

Small wonder that his immediate disciples, when they came to record their impressions of

his ministry should have recalled this interpretative power in Jesus, and have written, "he knew what was in man."

And here it behooves us to revert to the question we asked at the outset, must we not think of Jesus as having had a share in the origination of Christianity, albeit that historically the new religion came to birth through Paul, and only at the close of the decade following the crucifixion? It would certainly seem, from all that was said in the preceding chapter, that the founding of Christianity was exclusively the work of Paul, and that in no legitimate way could warrant be found for the popular practice of designating Jesus as its founder. Yet there are certain considerations, of which account has been taken in this chapter, that compel our assigning an inalienable part to Jesus. Let us briefly enumerate the more important of these considerations.

1. Without the crucifixion of Jesus and belief in his resurrection there could have been no Christianity. Messianism would have held the field until its decadence and disappearance following the destruction of Jerusalem under Titus in the year 70. Moreover, it was in the name of Jesus and on faith in him that Paul

presented the plan of salvation which is the core of the Christian religion as distinguished from all other systems of faith.

2. All the while that Paul, at Damascus and at Tarsus, was engaged in working out that plan of salvation and thereupon spreading the knowledge of it, in a succession of missionary journeys, throughout Asia Minor, Greece and Rome, moral influences were at work that derive not from him but from Jesus and of these cognizance must perforce be taken if we would know the whole truth of the founding of Christianity. For, these moral forces were operative from the first days of Jesus' public ministry, they were acknowledged by the apostle Paul and in every age of Christian history have been given some measure of realization. Recall the familiar phrases in which Paul expressed his appreciation of the moral influence that emanated from Jesus. "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Jesus." "Be like-minded one toward another, following the example of Christ." "Bear ye one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ." "I beseech you by the gentleness and meekness of Christ."[22] "Remember the words of Jesus, it is more blessed to

[22] Romans xvi.; xv. 5; Galatians vi. 2; 2 Corinthians x. 1.

give than to receive."[23] From Jesus, Paul learned to make love the supreme virtue of the Christian life,[24] holding that the spirit of Jesus in the disciple manifests itself chiefly in love for one's fellows, particularly for one's Christian brethren. How, then, shall the founding of Christianity be adequately explained if Jesus' gospel of love be left out of account?

3. Nay, more, among these moral influences that have been present in Christianity from the start and that derive directly from Jesus, must be included the personal example of Jesus—an influence that takes precedence over all others because the most potent of all in the reformation of character. That personal example was threefold, including sincerity, sympathy and consecration. Lest their significance be underestimated, let a word be said in explication of each.

His loyalty to conviction, his white-mindedness, his spiritual integrity was such that he preferred ignominy, persecution, death, rather than betray the truth as he saw it! He preferred the luxury of his convictions to the luxury of existence. Life to him consisted in an

[23] Acts xx. 35.

[24] 1 Corinthians xiii.

untrammeled mind, an unpolluted conscience, an untarnished ideal served with an unsullied soul. Despite everything that pointed to the contrary—the despotism of Roman oppression, the economic and social conditions—Jesus dared to cherish the magnificent dream of a renovated world, to be miraculously established when the doomed world would be destroyed. He sought to lead Judaism forth upon a new career of influence and power through his gospel of repentance, righteousness and outreach toward perfection. But when the leaders of his people flouted a different ideal, Jesus died in brave and solitary allegiance to his own ideal.

As for the sympathy that was in Jesus, it went out to all sorts and conditions of men; to the rich, the proud, the lordly, because he felt the pathos of their complacent, self-satisfied mediocrity; to the lowest and most degraded, because he believed that they, too, were potentially made in the image of the divine. Truly does the sympathy that was in Jesus flood the gospel story as the waters of the sea flood its basin and its shores. The adulteress, the outcast, the prodigal son, sinners of every shade and every grade came into his presence

only to leave it with the benediction of his sympathetic soul, awakening each to the consciousness of rebirth into the moral life, as beneath the ashes of their moral failure they were shown the spark of potentiality, never quite extinguished and waiting to be fanned into a flame.

Of the consecration of Jesus to a great life purpose—the preparation of men and women for membership in the coming kingdom—it must be said that there can be no grander aim than that, assuming that we strip the ancient Messianic hope of its transient element and hold the permanent expectation of a coming Commonwealth of Man, to be gradually evolved by social reform and moral education. Verily, the supreme aspiration in life can be nothing less than that, and there is more hope for the world in one Jesus with such an aim, than in ten thousand men, trained to scientific habits of thought, yet without any such transcendent aim to which their thought shall tend.

Speaking for myself—and I have no right to speak for any one else—I freely confess that it is not possible for me, by any honest and warranted construction put upon his words, to ac-

cept his teaching with reference to *wealth* and the *rich;* or to *marriage,* as set forth in the nineteenth chapter of the Matthean gospel; or to *divorce,* as presented in the tenth chapter of Mark's gospel; or to his doctrine of escape that is characteristic also of Buddhistic ethics, looking upon the world as evil and the whole physical and æsthetic life as hindering rather than helping the soul, the emphasis everywhere upon self-abnegation and utter disregard of ordinary affairs in the interests of spiritual progress. "Take no thought for the morrow, saying, what shall we eat or what shall we drink or wherewithal shall we be clothed. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness. Verily, a rich man shall hardly enter the kingdom of heaven. Easier is it for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." Such passages are typical of the dominant tendency of Jesus' teaching, toward the spiritual alone rather than to a harmony of sense and soul, to self-abnegation rather than to self-realization, to the elevation of a side rather than the broadening of the whole of one's life. Not once in the gospels is it hinted that the ideal to be striven for is the har-

monious development of all the possibilities of our human nature in a rounded life. Nor, again, can I share this anthropomorphic idea of God that Jesus entertained, nor his belief in the efficacy of petitional prayer, or his view of miracles, of angels and demons, of paradise and hell. Yet do I find in him an ever-inspiring exemplar of sincerity, spiritual greatness, sympathy and consecrated devotion to a supreme purpose. Indeed, were I to state in a word what Jesus means to me, it would be *inspiration.* If to live a spiritual life means to be ever true to one's highest convictions, to cultivate the spirit of sympathy (and from the moral standpoint rather than from the sentimental alone), to be steadfastly consecrated to a worthy life aim, then, in my judgment, no more radiant example of it has ever been furnished than that which we see in Jesus.

Here, then, are spiritual forces that were operative in Christianity throughout the period of Paul's ministry, yet all of them originating not with him but with Jesus. Consequently, while we are constrained to give to Paul the first place as the immediate, direct founder of Christianity, to Jesus we accord an indispensa-

ble part, for without him there could have been no *apostle* Paul. Moreover, from Jesus there emanated directly moral influences which, from the very beginning, were an inalienable and integral part of the Christian religion.

SCRIPTURE SELECTIONS FROM THE KORAN

(Introductory to Chapter V)

Adhere so firmly to the truth that your yea shall be yea, and your nay, nay.

Hide not the truth when you know it, clothe it not with falsehood.

One hour of justice is worth more than seventy years of prayer.

Be good to orphans and to the poor, whether they be of your own people or strangers.

One came and said to Mohammed: "My mother has died, what shall I do for the good of her soul?" The prophet thought of the panting heat of the desert and replied, "Dig a well, that the thirsty may have water to drink." The man dug a well and said, "This have I done for my mother."

Every good act is charity, giving water to the thirsty, removing stones and thorns from the road is charity; smiling in your brother's face is charity.

To endure and to pardon is the wisdom of life.

Let none of you treat his neighbor in a way you yourself would dislike to be treated.

Let us be like trees that yield their fruit to those who throw stones at them.

Temperance is a tree that has contentment for its root and peace for its fruit.

That is not righteousness: whether ye turn your faces towards East or West, God's is the East as well

as the West. But verily righteousness is his who believes in Allah, in the day of Judgment, in the angels, in the Book (Koran), and the prophets; who bestows his wealth (though he loves it) upon kindred, and orphans and the poor and the homeless, and all those who ask; and also for the delivering of captives; he who is steadfast in prayer and giveth alms, who standeth firmly by his agreements when he has once entered into them; and who is patient in adversity, in hardship, and in times of trial. These are the righteous, and these are the God-fearing.

CHAPTER V

MOHAMMEDANISM

We come now to the latest of the world's great religions, Mohammedanism. Its founder, like Moses, the Prophets, Jesus and Paul, belonged to the Semitic branch of the human family. Of all the great religions, Mohammedanism is the least appreciated and the most misunderstood. It originated thirteen centuries ago on the Arabian peninsula where the streams of commerce and of culture met and mingled in the Middle Ages and where the markets were stationed for trade in the treasures of India and the products of the Mediterranean coasts. There, within the short period of twenty years and without any royal patronage whatsoever, this religion was created and established: Buddhism had its Asoka, Zoroastrianism its Vishtaspa, Judaism its Joshua, Christianity its Constantine, but Mohammedanism had no one of titled distinction to assist in its spread. It numbers to-day about two hundred and fifty millions

and extends over an area equal to one-third of the globe. From Arabia it spread eastward across Syria, Asia Minor, Turkey; southward to Africa, covering more than half of that continent. It found its way to India, to the islands of Sumatra, Java, and Borneo, and finally gained a foothold in eastern Europe. And while these conquests were achieved sometimes by force, in the majority of cases propaganda was carried on by peaceful means. True, the ninth Sura enjoined attacking idolators until they accept Islam, and it insists that Jews and Christians be forced to become Moslems or pay tribute. But it should be remembered that this mandate was meant for Arabia alone, and that to-day the Sultan of Turkey, who, as caliph, is the ecclesiastical head of the Moslem world, conducts negotiations like any other ruler in accordance with rules agreed upon by civilized nations. In other words, political conditions determine his exegesis of the Koran. F. W. Arnold in his *Preaching of Islam* has made it plain that never was it the principle or the practice of Islam to convert people generally by forcible means, albeit that Mohammed, like Robespierre, believed in the efficacy of fear, holding that social order, personal morality and

the preservation of a creed can be insured only by the discipline of terror. Before his religion had reached the fiftieth anniversary of its founding it had extended from the Indus to the Tagus and from the Volga to the Arabian Sea. The Niger and the Nile, the Jordan and the Ganges, the Maritza and the Yang-tse-Kiang fertilize Mohammedan soil. Twice this religion threatened to overrun Europe, in 732, when it was checked at Tours by Charles Martel, and again in 1683, when John, King of Poland, with twenty thousand men, defeated the Mohammedan army at Vienna.

Incalculably great is the debt of the world to the early representatives of Mohammedanism. For it was they who transmitted the treasures of Greek literature from the Middle Age to the Renaissance, they who originated the graceful art-forms of which the Taj-Mahal and the Alhambra are the most famous examples. It was they who contributed to the sciences of algebra and chemistry, astronomy and medicine; they who dotted the Saracen empire with universities and built at Bagdad and at Cairo the most renowned libraries in the world. When London was a city of hovels and the stench in its streets such that no one could breathe its

air with impunity, Cordova was noted for the cleanliness and beauty of its streets and squares. Arabic is the most widely spoken language, and though Chinese characters are used by more people, Arabic will carry one further round the world. And with the Arabic vocabulary has gone the Mohammedan religion. Today we decorate our walls and floors with fabrics that Mohammedans taught us to weave, we regale our senses with perfumes that they taught us to make, we teach our children the higher mathematics from textbooks of which they were the original creators.

It seemed necessary to make these preliminary statements, even as on the occasion of the course of lectures on "Great Moral Leaders of the East,"[1] because the notion still obtains that the indebtedness is exclusively on the Mohammedan side; that had it not been for Christian influences Mohammedanism would still be "wallowing in semi-barbarism."

Rather should we think how Christian civilization would have suffered had it not been for Mohammedan devotion, during the Middle Age, to the preservation of culture. Great as the influence of Christianity has been, it can be

[1] See the chapter on "Mohammed."

reckoned as only one of many factors that have contributed to the advancement of civilization.

Strange, indeed, it is that though Mohammedanism lies in the broad daylight of history, less is known of its founder than of Jesus and very much less than of Confucius. Nor is the reason for this far to seek. Our only contemporary source of information is the Koran, and this is concerned with dogmas, ceremonialism and organization rather than with biographical details. For these were well known to the little group of believers and so needed no mention. When we try to supplement the few data preserved for us in the Koran by appeal to the earliest Mohammedan biographies we find that, like those of Jesus, they were written two or more decades after his death and, moreover, were so embellished with legendary lore as to forbid the possibility of unqualified statement as to the details of his life. Ibn Isha, earliest of Moslem biographers of the prophet, wrote his account about 800, but such of it as has been preserved in the compilation of Ibn Hisham is so fanciful as to forbid our attaching any particular value to it. Bokhari, about 850, gathered over half a million traditions of Mohammed, and of these he selected about seven thou-

sand as, in his judgment, authentic. Doubtless these do contain some genuine data of Mohammed's words and deeds, but we are without any criterion whereby to judge of their trustworthiness. Nevertheless we are not left hopelessly in the dark in our effort to arrive at reliable information on the subject. For what a man does under the public eye, more especially if he occupy a prominent position, will impress itself upon the mind of his contemporaries and be handed down with some degree of accuracy, and thus the general trend and character of his life may be fairly well known.

The name Mohammed means "praised one," and, as such, was an epithet attached to the prophet's real name, which, according to one of the various traditions, was Kutum.

Mohammed's birth-year we are enabled to fix by reference to the one solidly established date in early Moslem history, viz., 622, the date of the *hejira,* or flight of the prophet from Mecca to Medina, with which the Mohammedan era begins. His first public appearance occurred when Mohammed was forty years of age, and we are told that he was fifty-two when he entered Medina as a fugitive from Mecca. Hence his birth-year was 570. His birthplace was

Mecca, world-renowned for the annual pilgrimages thither, the Mohammedan law requiring every believer to go at least once in his lifetime to the sacred city—a law whose operation brings thither some two hundred thousand pilgrims every year.

From the ninety-third Sura of the Koran we learn that Mohammed was bereft of both father and mother while still a mere child. "Did not thy Lord find thee an orphan and provide for thee shelter?" He was adopted first by his maternal grandfather and later by a rich and generous uncle, Abu Talib. After serving him in the capacity of a commercial traveler to Syria and southern Arabia, Mohammed, in his twenty-fifth year, entered the service of a rich widow, Khadijah, as camel driver and conductor of caravans, plying between Arabia and Syria. So infatuated was this woman by the young man that she married him, and though she was fifteen years his senior, their marriage seems to have been happy and mutually inspiring. Indeed, she seems to have done for Mohammed just what it is in the power of woman to do for man; what ordinary women do in a commonplace way and what great women do in a sublime way, i.e., she kept him up to the level

of the best that was in him, challenged him to his highest possible performance, roused him to fresh energy and zeal when he succumbed to ennui, nursed him in his hours of illness, inspired him to be worthy of the great calling wherewith he had been called. While Khadijah lived she was his only wife. Only after her death did he begin that succession of matrimonial alliances which continued up to the end of his life. Some of these wives were widows of followers of the prophet, and he took them to wife out of charity, but in most of these later marriages the impelling motive seems to have been his passion for beautiful women.

Of the physical appearance of Mohammed we know only what tradition tells us. No authentic portrait has come down to us, for the prophet instilled into the hearts of his adherents an abhorrence of idolatry and image-worship. Such portraits as have been produced were inspired by imagination and prejudice. Nevertheless from the *Sunna* (the orthodox tradition which reverts to Abu-Bekr as the true successor of Mohammed), we derive sufficient data to form a mental picture of the prophet's personal appearance. He was a man of medium height, with a large, well-shaped head from which dark,

curly hair streamed down to his shoulders. Under heavy eyelashes and heavier eyebrows his restless eyes looked out. Slightly aquiline was his nose, and his teeth were regular and white as hailstones.

Intellectually he was a man of wisdom rather than of knowledge. Though he retired frequently to a cave for study, it was not books but nature and the tablets of his own heart that he studied. Writings in those days were few and few persons could read them. Several times in the Koran Mohammed described himself as "illiterate," "ignorant." In the twenty-ninth Sura he affirms that prior to the revelation of the Koran he could not read or write. In all probability he never saw a Hebrew Old Testament or a Greek New Testament. What he knew of the Bible he derived from hearsay, and rarely if ever did any narrative reach him in the original form. His effort to assimilate what he could not understand of Jewish and of Christian theology accounts for the frightful confusion of ideas and the exceedingly crude interpretations of scripture passages that confront us so often in the pages of the Koran. Education in Mohammed's day was acquired for the most part not by reading and writing, but by observation

of men and events, and he was a keen, close observer of both. With him instinct took the place of logic and common sense of scholarship. His was the wisdom that is born of experience and insight. His, too, was a gift seldom possessed by reformers—showing consideration for conservatives while preaching radical ideas—the gift of knowing how to insist on the essential desiderata and not spoil his chance of scoring success by stickling for minor details.

Morally, his life was exemplary in particulars for which he is not usually credited, more especially in the graces of simplicity, sincerity, moral courage and magnanimity. In the Apocrypha of the Koran the following story is recorded, and in all probability rooted in a genuine tradition. It illustrates the generous spirit he could show toward an opponent.

Mohammed lay asleep under a palm tree, and when he awoke, suddenly, he saw his enemy Diutur standing before him with drawn sword. "Now, Mohammed, who will save thee from death?" cried Diutur. "God," answered Mohammed. Diutur let the sword sink. Mohammed tore it away from him and cried in his turn: "Now, Diutur, who will save *thee* from death?" "No one," answered Diutur. "Let me show

thee that the same God will save thee also!" cried Mohammed, and gave him his sword back. Thenceforth Diutur became one of the most faithful adherents of the prophet.

That he possessed moral courage is evidenced by the adamantine inflexibility with which he taught and maintained unpopular opinions, by the dignity and intensity with which he made his counter charges when pronounced by his enemies to be either insane or an impostor. A devotional spirit was characteristic of his ministry from the start. "Call on the name of thy Lord, devoting thyself exclusively to him," is the spiritual injunction of the seventy-third Sura. And here, too, we read Mohammed's confession that he was bidden to rise repeatedly from his bed and devote the greater part of the night to prayer and reading of the Koran. His was the simple life, temperate to the point of austerity. For we are told that he would go for months without eating a single hearty meal, rising at dawn, lighting his own fire and cooking his own food, not with a view to enjoying it, but solely to sustain life and be fit for work. In order that his slaves might have a larger share of freedom from toil, he habitually mended his own clothes and shoes.

He has been branded "the lying prophet" and his name has been used as a synonym for Satan. Dante, in the twenty-eighth canto of the *Inferno,* described him as "rent from the chin to where one breaketh wind," wandering aimlessly about in the eighth circle of hell, with fellow "disseminators of scandal and of schism." Luther, in one of his violent pronouncements upon people he despised, exclaimed, "O fie, you horrid devil, you damned Mohammed." Not until seven centuries after his death was a public word spoken in his defense. Sir John Mandeville, an English explorer, it was who published the first kindly utterance in behalf of Mohammed. Four centuries later Lessing, in his *Nathan der Weise,* gave expression to his profound respect for the prophet's worth. Early in the nineteenth century came Carlyle, startling the British public by according to Mohammed a place among the heroes of history. Yet notwithstanding the tributes of these candid investigators, prejudice, born of ignorance, continues its ancient hold and persists in propagating opinions of the prophet that have no valid basis whatever. Pulpit, platform and press have been proven guilty of misrepresentation. "A fanatic

who used his religion as a cloak for immorality," said a popular preacher in a large Christian church. "A compound of bravery, knavery, sensuality, and abysmal ignorance," declared a lecturer of national reputation. "A religion of imposture," is what we read in Webster's Dictionary, defining Mohammedanism.[2] But was Mohammed an impostor? Was Voltaire right when in a satirical verse he voiced the view of most orthodox Christians and of many a crude rationalist?

Chaque people à son tour a brillé sur la terre.
Par les lois, par les arts et surtout par les guerres.
Le temps d'Arabie est enfin venu:
Il faut un nouveau culte, il faut de nouveaux fers
Il faut un nouveau Dieu pour l'aveugle univers.

Was a credulous humanity victimized by the crafty prophet who palmed off a new cult, new chains and a new God on an unsuspecting public?

Let it suffice to recall three incidents from the life of Mohammed, proving conclusively that he was not an impostor.[3] As a young man Mohammed had received a handsome salary for serving as custodian of the "Kaaba," that

[2] Happily the latest edition omits this definition.

[3] Here I quote from my *Great Religious Teachers of the East*, pp. 247-248.

enshrined the sacred stone worshiped by resident believers and by visiting pilgrims. But in time there came to be associated with this object of veneration certain superstitious practices which Mohammed could not conscientiously endorse. To criticize them meant loss of his position and salary, yet he did not hesitate to denounce them and promptly sacrificed his profitable custodianship. Surely such conduct was not that of an impostor. Again, when implored by his wealthy uncle to desist from his preaching of "radical" views, Mohammed to name his own price for the silence his uncle desired, he repudiated the tempting offer, preferring the luxury of free thought and free speech with poverty, if need be, to the luxury of ease and wealth with a tarnished soul. Read his own brave and uncompromising utterance: "Were I to be offered the sun in my right hand and the moon in my left hand to induce me to abandon my undertaking, the offer would be futile, for I will not rest until Allah carry his cause to victory, or till I die for it." Could such be the part of an impostor? Once more, his only claim was that of being the instrument through which God had revealed the Koran.

He made no claim to be infallible, or sinless, or supernatural. "Praise me not," he said, "as Jesus was praised. I am liable to err as other men—I, too, need forgiveness for sin." Such, surely, is not the language of an impostor. Without pausing to adduce further evidence of Mohammed's sincerity and integrity of purpose we may justly believe that nothing but the bigotry, malice and jealousy of enemies originated the ancient charge of imposture. And nothing but blind prejudice and lazy indifference to truth can account for the perpetuation of the charge. No unprejudiced reader can fail to be impressed by Mohammed's deep-seated faith in himself as one called of God to preach; a faith produced perhaps by "visions" to which he was given, but more probably the product of reflection and experience. He had reached a monotheistic religion, and believing it to be of first-rate importance to his people, he would naturally feel that Allah had ordained him to preach it. As the Hebrew prophets introduced their utterances with the phrase "thus saith the Lord," so Mohammed had a like consciousness of having been divinely inspired.

But over against these finer phases of the

moral character of the man are other aspects less engaging and, indeed, disappointing, notably his frequent yielding to passion; desire for revenge, love of sensual pleasure, ambition to rule, a bitter, relentless spirit toward opponents, a want of clarity of moral vision and relinquishment of moral responsibility, employing at times an alleged "revelation" to justify conduct obviously reprehensible. Nor is there any greater proof of his power in Medina than the fact that he could perpetrate such a spiritual wrong and yet retain the confidence and respect of his followers.

Mecca was the commercial, literary and religious center of northern Arabia, and as such it was also a meeting-place for men of divers views. Here Mohammed, enjoying social position and freedom from business cares (because of his marriage to the wealthy Khadijah), met representatives of Judaism, Christianity, Zoroastrianism and other faiths, an experience that was crucial in its bearing upon his career as the prophet of Allah, whom he regarded as the one and only God to be worshiped and obeyed. Tradition has it that in one of the nervous attacks to which he was subject, Mohammed became apprised of his mission to serve as "the

prophet of the Lord."[4] But even as Jesus and Gautama and Zoroaster hesitated before entering upon their prophetic calling, so also did Mohammed. In his case, as in that of his predecessors, the legend of a "temptation" arose, expressing, figuratively, an actual experience of doubt as to personal preparedness for assumption of the prophetic office. Once convinced of his divinely appointed mission to make known the one true God, Mohammed confided his conviction to his intimate friends alone. But, encouraged by their comments, he soon made it public and announced himself a Heaven-sent religious teacher. It was at the *Kaaba* that his views were first proclaimed. This inclosure, which housed the gods of many tribes, was a general meeting-place for men from all quarters of the city who came there to pray. Mohammed, as one of a company who assembled to perform their devotions, took occasion to set forth his view of the local worships as obsolete and to proclaim a "final judgment," with "paradise," for all who accepted his doctrine of Allah, and "hell" for all dissenters. Tactfully, yet firmly he set himself in opposition (*a*) to the

[4] See my *Great Religious Teachers of the East*, pp. 239-240, for the legend of his call to the ministry.

popular attachment to the local religions; (*b*) to the commercial interests that feared the introduction of reforms liable to imperil trade; (*c*) to the pretensions of the ruling (Koreish) aristocracy whose prestige and power were threatened by the new doctrine. A Lenin in the field of religion, he audaciously launched a revolution, elevating himself to a primacy that set at naught the existing tribal authority. Naturally enough he was charged with lunacy, Satanic magic and kindred defamations, but his rejoinders and actions gave conclusive proof of seriousness, sanity and consecration.[5] As time went on the number of his followers increased, so much so that persecution became the order of the Koreish and Mohammed was compelled to establish the new movement elsewhere. Meeting with some pilgrims from Yathreb, he impressed them so favorably with his message that they promptly presented it to their fellow citizens and in June, 622, Mohammed, accompanied by his beloved disciple, Abu-Bekr, left Mecca for Yathreb. Soon thereafter, the name of the city was changed to Medina (the city of the prophet). Here conditions obtained altogether favorable to the reception of his message. Through their

[5] Suras 81. 52.

contact with resident Jews, the native Arabs had become familiar with the doctrine of one God. In Medina there was no such powerful and conservative aristocracy as ruled in Mecca. Moreover, the two cities were commercial rivals and the citizens of the latter would be proud to take from the former a "prophet." In passing it may be noted that this enforced move from Mecca to Medina had its parallel in the experience of Jesus who was obliged to go from Nazareth to Capernaum in order to get a respectful hearing for his message. The Buddha, too, had to turn from Kapilavastu to Benares for the self-same reason and Confucius was compelled to choose between quitting his native city Lu for northern Shantung, or remaining at home and abandoning his moral mission. Thus did each of these reformers verify the familiar adage, "A prophet is not without honor save in his own home town."

Once established in Medina, Mohammed, of necessity, assumed a new rôle. Throughout his ten years' ministry at Mecca he had been simply a moral and social reformer and a pleader for the worship of Allah alone. He had denounced the social vices, the low business standards, the crass idolatries that prevailed. He had been a

Jeremiah in Mecca; in Medina he was a Hildebrand, ruling with an autocratic hand. He became dictator as well as preacher. Gradually the disaffected were either converted or banished, or annihilated in battle. In 639, after being permitted by the Koreish to make a pilgrimage to Mecca, Mohammed won over the Meccans without a blow. Soon thereafter he led a conquering crusade that culminated in the winning of all Arabia to his claims. In the spring of 632 he made a final pilgrimage to Mecca and on the eighth of June he died, leaving to Abu-Bekr and to succeeding caliphs the task of missionary expansion, destined to extend the faith over an empire greater than that of Rome.

To understand how Mohammedanism came into the world we must recall the conditions that obtained in medieval Arabia. Communities of Jews and Christians had long been living there in close social and political relation with the native Arabs. Given such interrelation and there will occur eventually a spontaneous sifting of religious beliefs and rites and what remains will commend itself to the entire population. The pantheons of Babylonia and of Egypt were formed as a result of such social-political unification. So, too, was the Hebrew polytheism

(Yahweh-Baal) of the twelfth century before our era, a product of political and social fusion. In Arabia, in the seventh century, just such a syncretism occurred following the social assimilation of the three main peoples resident there. The Christianity of Arabia had shrunk into a shapeless mass of lifeless dogmas; "the doctrine of the trinity" had degenerated into "tritheism." The Judaism of Arabia had deteriorated to the level of an idolatry that included Ezra (the scribe and probable editor of the Pentateuch) among the personalities worshiped, causing Mohammed to complain of the "Ezrolatry" of his time. The native Arabian religion was, like that of the undeveloped Semitic world everywhere, a mixture of polytheism, fetichism and astrology; with rites that were barbaric and in some instances immoral. In and around Mecca the local divinity was known as "the god" (Allah) and to this name Mohammed appealed when instituting his religious reform, though the Arabians were miles from Mohammed's monotheism, believing as they did, in hosts of gods and of evil spirits (*jinn*) and appropriate idolatries. Mohammed, recoiling from these, associated himself with the "Hanifs"—those of the community who

were monotheists, discarding the worship of all gods but Allah. Seizing the psychological moment for the abolition of Arabian idolatry as it obtained among Jews, Christians and Arabs, Mohammed appealed for a return to what he believed was the original religion of the land, the fountain source of all three religions. By a stroke of genius he pointed to Abraham as its founder. Jewish tradition had represented Abraham as the great ancestor of Israel and as the establisher of true religion after the flood. The apostle Paul, in his letter to the Galatians, had argued for the *temporary* serviceableness of Judaism in terms of the religion of Abraham. Mohammed, enlarging upon this position, went back of both Christianity and Judaism to make the patriarch the representative of the faith embodied in Islam.[6] Abraham was neither Christian nor Jew, but Moslem, i.e., he was anti-idolatry. Moreover, he was acknowledged by Christians and Jews alike to be a divinely appointed model, and his chief characteristic was faith in the one only true God, the essence of Islam. Let this ancestral faith be restored and let there be preserved all that is vital and serviceable in each of the three local religions,

[6] Sura 2, lines 11, 124, foll.

compatible with the Abrahamic monotheism. Such was the plea whereby Mohammed, believing himself to be a "prophet of the most High" to whom this syncretism had been revealed, succeeded in welding the conflicting elements into a harmonious religious whole—Islam, the religion of submission to Allah, the sole and omnipotent Sovereign of mankind.

Our ultimate source of information for this religion is the Koran, the most widely read of all the scriptures of the world, and more extensively and frequently read among Moslems than is the New Testament among Christians. To the ordinary non-Mohammedan reader the Koran is, as Carlyle complained, "the most toilsome reading, wearisome confused jumble, endless iterations, long-windedness, entanglement; crude, insupportable stupidity." But such a judgment ignores the mode of its composition and the great rôle played by this Bible in religious history. The preacher who is obliged to address audiences for many years on a few topics will of necessity repeat himself. As conductor of caravans to and from Mecca, Mohammed heard stories of prophets and kings, descriptions of the day of judgment, of hell, and of paradise and these found their way into his

discourses regardless of authentication. Elsewhere I have described the Koran as a potpourri of myths, legends, narratives, legal statutes, ethical precepts, ceremonial injunctions—a reservoir into which, through Mohammed's mind, many different streams of Jewish, Christian and Arabian thought were emptied. But the thought and the style of the book suggest the camel of the desert—free to browse wherever stubble is to be found. Each of the one hundred and fourteen chapters (Suras) has its superscription, but this bears no relation to the contents. Thanks to the labors of Goldziher and other representatives of the higher criticism as applied to the Koran, we now know the chronological order of the Suras and we read the book in three sections corresponding to the three periods of the prophet's career. The first of these was the period of misappreciation and opposition, in which doubt and misgiving invaded the prophet's mind, conditions that were reflected in a series of Suras surcharged with intense feeling bordering on frenzy and replete with the record of visions that irresistibly persuade us of his sincerity. The second period was that of public appreciation and growing success, indicated in Suras marked by calm, dis-

passionate discourse and addressed to converts who acknowledged his authority. The third period was one of concession and compromise for the sake of increased success. The prophet had grown astute, shrewd, calculating, politic in his aggressive crusade—qualities that account for the weak and willowy utterances we meet with, showing the man's defection from the consecrated enthusiasm of an earlier day. Mohammed's idea of the Koran accords with his conception of Allah's sovereignty. For him it was the transcript of an original volume preserved in Heaven.[7] The Old Testament and the New were only selections from this celestial book; here is the complete and final revelation in the Koran, revealed piecemeal to the prophet, by relays of angels, each revelation in turn dictated to a scribe and committed to writing on whatever material was available at the moment. In some places the discourses show unmistakable signs of literary form, bespeaking editorial work, but their fragmentary character is none the less apparent. The total deliverances of the prophet were collected and put into book-form by his Medina amanuensis, Zeid in 633, by order of the Caliph, Abu-Bekr, while the latter, seven-

[7] Sura 43.

teen years later, conducted a final revision of the book, giving it the form in which we now have it. When one considers the manner in which Mohammed's thoughts came to him, pushing on from his surcharged brain, undiked, unchanneled, too swift for either skillful or consistent expression, one appreciates the inevitable contradictoriness that marks the record on many a page. As a result Moslems were sorely tried in their endeavor to fulfill certain of his injunctions. But the second Sura came to their rescue pointing the way out of the dilemma. "What verses we cancel or cause thee to forget we give a better." Accordingly Moslems have in every instance of contradictory precepts adopted the one best suited to modern ideas and canceled the other. Hitherto nearly two hundred and fifty such cancellations have been agreed upon and this agreement is the hope of Islam. "My people," said Mohammed, "will never agree on an error." Thus agreement is the criterion upon which the process of abrogating Koranic error proceeds. Two characteristics of the Koran distinguish it from all the other sacred books of the great religions. It exists in but a single text and it is the work of but a single author. The destruction of all the texts, save

the one we possess, did away with dissensions and divisions based on textual differences. Yet is it a decided *dis*advantage to have only one text, as every student of New Testament manuscripts knows. Similarly, a unitary origin gives to the Koran "unity of thought and rhetorical impressiveness," yet is it a distinct *dis*advantage in that the book is confined to the ideas of only one mind and permits no escape from the limitations of the author. Contrast, in this respect, the Bible and the Koran.

One integrating idea pervades the Koran and it marks the distinctive note in Mohammedanism —*islam,* or submission to the omnipotent Allah. The frequent occurrence of this Arabic verb in the Koran led to the Mohammedan religion being called Islam. It conveys the idea of making one's peace with Allah by voluntary surrender to his will, though, as we shall see, much more than this is involved in it. The supreme duty of Moslems is to believe in Allah alone and to obey his commandments as revealed through his prophet. *"Lo illah il Allah, Mohammed rasoul Allahi."* "There is no God but Allah and Mohammed is the prophet of Allah." So runs the Islamic creed. The fundamental sin, therefore, is unbelief. It is against unbelievers

(Ad, Thamud, Madian, etc.) that the bitterest denunciations in the Koran are hurled, the very violence of Mohammed's invective proving the importance he attached to the profession of belief in Allah and his prophet. His detestation of the Jews was due, above all else, to their refusal to accept Allah. "The curse of Allah is upon them; He will deal with them on the day of resurrection."[8] The Christians were despised and denounced as infidels because they worshiped Virgin Mary and Christ along with Allah.[9] Allah is "the resistless One," "the mighty and merciful One," merciful because of his omnipotence. He is "the Lord of the East and of the West, the One to whom everything is subject." As in all other Semitic religions the deity is external to man, transcendent and absolute. Nowhere is the absoluteness of Allah so vehemently insisted upon as in the Koran, and it is the distinction of Mohammed that he laid hold on this conception and maintained it against the prevailing polytheisms of his time and place. For him, as for Semites generally, a "trinitarian" conception of deity was unthinkable. Hence his version of the Trinity as con-

[8] Suras 2, 22.

[9] Sura 5, lines 17, foll.

sisting of God, Jesus and the mother of Jesus.[10] Though described throughout the Koran as omnipotent, Allah's power is practically limited by the Arabian *Jinn* and the Christian figure of *Iblis* (Satan). Both the New Testament and the Avesta accept the rôle of the Devil as a fact, offering no explanation of its origin. But the Koran accounts for it and strives to reconcile it with Allah's omnipotence. We read that when Adam was created, the angels were compelled to pay him homage. All but Iblis obeyed and for his disobedience he was consigned to hell. He begged to be released till the day of judgment and the request having been granted Iblis announced his purpose to seduce all souls except the chosen of Allah. The proposition was accepted by Allah and his omnipotence saved, albeit at a moral price, left unnoticed in the Koran. And yet it should be observed that Allah is the embodiment (*a*) of justice, in that he treats all men here or hereafter according to their deserts; (*b*) of love, in that he forgives the repentant sinner and those who sin ignorantly. On the other hand, he reveals traits that are positively repulsive, indulging a revengeful spirit and approving acts that are violations of

[10] Sura 5, line 116.

a decent social code.[11] He is, indeed, but an enlargement of the tribal Allah, merciful and kind to his worshipers, hostile to unbelievers. Nay, more, he is a reproduction of the virtues and faults visible in the character of Mohammed.

Allah is likened, in the Koran, to the wind, and all mankind to a field of grain that sways with the blowing of the wind. He is the heavenly Sultan and Moslems are they who, like the willows, bend before the blast; infidels are they who, like the oak, resist it. But it would be a serious mistake to suppose that submission involves merely an attitude of self-surrender, humility and subserviency toward the Omnipotent One. Four definite duties are comprised in the ultimate obligation of submission.

First, to abjure idolatry—the bestowal upon false gods of the homage due Allah alone. As the subjects of an earthly Sultan are punished to the full extent of the civil law if they dare to enthrone a usurper and do him homage, so the idolaters who dare to acknowledge any other deity than the heavenly Sultan will be punished on the judgment day to the full extent of the religious law. Mohammed's abhorrence of idolatry is attested in every mosque and palace

[11] Sura 96.

throughout the Islamic world. For in none is there to be seen any statue or image representing the human form; only arabesques, geometric traceries, that reproduce objects from the inanimate world alone.

Second, to extend the heavenly Sultan's dominion, to make converts and by force if need be, because to refuse to acknowledge Allah is rebellion and rebellion must be suppressed, by persuasion if possible, and if not thus, then by force. During his Meccan ministry, Mohammed stressed the duty of fighting for the faith but warned against aggression.[12] When at Medina, he assumed the rôle of dictator, legislator, conqueror, his injunctions were unqualified. He bade his followers not to fail in bringing the Ta'ifs and the Bedouin tribes into submission. It should be remembered, however, that this attitude was inspired by a political rather than by a religious motive, for he tolerated Judaism and Christianity as "revealed" religions, exacting from their adherents a tax for the protection he vouchsafed to them.

Third, in the series of obligations which submission involves, is the squaring of one's moral account before the Judgment Day dawns. For

[12] Sura 2, lines 186-190.

on that day the destiny of all souls will be determined for all time. Then will a man walking to the Judgment seat be met by a loathsome looking object to which he will cry, "Begone"; but it will reply, "I cannot, I am thy conscience." Then will the fraudulent buyer and the fraudulent seller walk to the Judgment seat with the goods they dishonestly bought or sold tied to their necks and dragging behind them! All rewards and punishments are, in this religion, relegated to the future. Here on earth a pious man may suffer and a wicked one prosper, but this will not be the case in the hereafter. Future recompenses will consist in an abundance of delicious food and drink, the possession of pure and beautiful wives and other sensuous (not sensual) pleasures. The punishments awaiting the wicked are those made familiar to us already in early Christian Apocalypses and reproduced in Dante's masterpiece. From the Divine final sentence there is no appeal. Both the happiness and the misery are everlasting. Women no less than men may attain the bliss of paradise. The determining fact in any person's record is his or her attitude toward Islam, though in many verses of the Koran "good works" are referred to as "a man's best pos-

session and a sure means of acceptance with Allah."[13] These good works, however, are oftener doctrinal and ceremonial than ethical, the righteous being they who keep the requirements of the religious law. That a "believer" might possibly fail to enter paradise because of moral delinquencies was a matter on which the Koran furnished no light, probably because Mohammed's main concern was to keep the support of his followers and not jeopardize success by discouraging discriminations. Of *inward* truthfulness, self-sacrifice, justice, love, as a requisite in the squaring of one's moral account, Mohammed had nothing to say. Motives and other inner experiences are nowhere discussed by him, but are left to manifest themselves in deeds by which alone every one is to be judged.

Fourth of the factors making up the total content of submission is loyal devotion to the "pillars of fidelity" as they are called—five religious requirements binding upon all believers: (1) Repetition of the creed, "There is no God but Allah and Mohammed is his prophet." (2) Prayer and ablution four times daily in response to the call of the Muezzin when he ascends the minaret to summon the faithful

[13] Sura 3, line 79, *et passim.*

to prayer. (3) Almsgiving—two and a half per cent of one's possession to be devoted to philanthropy. (4) Fasting, from sunrise to sunset during Ramadan, the month in which Mohammed fled from Mecca to Medina. (5) A pilgrimage, at least once in one's lifetime, to Mecca.

In the Koranic scheme he is a Moslem who conforms to these external ritualistic details of the religion. Recitation of the creed is put first because unbelief is the fundamental sin. The official *salāt,* or prayer-recital, consists not of petition but of praise. "Celebrate the praise of thy Lord before sunrise and before sunset, during the night and evening and morning."[14] Dawn, noon, afternoon, sunset, night, were the stated times established by Mohammed and his injunction was that the prayer be recited "neither very loud nor very low," and "prepared for by washing." Medina Moslems at first turned in the direction of Jerusalem at prayer, but eventually Mecca became the *Kibla* or direction to which the faithful turned, thereby making the ordinance purely Arabian.[15] And by as much as David "fell and bowed himself and repented," prostration is the proper atti-

[14] Sura 20, line 130; cf. 30, line 17; 11, line 116; 17, line 80.
[15] Sura 2, lines 136-8.

tude in prayer.[16] Additional prayers are commended in the Koran—petitional, penitential and prayers of gratefulness for Allah's blessings and they who engage in these are said to be models for Moslems.

Almsgiving, for the benefit of Meccan emigrants to Medina, was for a long time necessary, but when their needs had been fully met a tax for alms took its place among the civil taxes and was of course paid in compliance with the prophet's command.

Fasting, for a month, from sunrise to sunset, has not proved an unqualified religious benefit; rather has it led to various unethical devices for restricting the physical strain, while in daily intercourse there is more quarreling in Ramadan than during any other month of the year. Experience has proved that this ordinance makes too great a demand on Moslem endurance. Asceticism has never been a feature of Semitic religions. Where it exists in Moslem countries it is of Aryan origin and the attempt to introduce it (perhaps in imitation of the Christian Lent) has proved a doubtful adjunct to the required ceremonialism of the faith. Mohammed meant the ordinance to serve as a use-

[16] Suras 38. 2.

ful means for promoting piety, but the experience of his followers would seem to indicate that his prescription was a mistake.

Pilgrimage to the Kaaba at Mecca was a long-established practice in Arabia and, being deeply rooted in the affection of the natives, Mohammed wisely retained it, together with the ceremonies associated with it, such as the sacrifice, the casting of stones at the Devil and the walk around the sacred building. The practice, however, of encompassing the Kaaba naked was abolished by Mohammed, though he enjoined observance of all the other ceremonies.[17] For many of the faithful living at long distances from Mecca fulfillment of this fifth requirement proved a great hardship, so much so, indeed, that the ordinance was modified to meet conditions where observance of it was practically impossible. In a like way the Roman Catholic Church protects its members against ceremonial oppression by providing corresponding concessions to those incapacitated for fulfillment of its prescriptions. Nothing has served more effectually to engender and sustain the sense of religious unity among Moslems than this institution of the pilgrimage, while a unique im-

[17] Suras 2. 22.

portance is given the Kaaba by reason of Mohammed's statement that Allah assigned the site for the building to the first monotheist, Abraham.[18]

Feeling the need of a more distinctly Islamic form of organization and religious service Mohammed, in imitation of the Synagogue and the Church, instituted the Mosque and set apart, like the Jews and Christians, one day in the week for public worship. His selection of Friday seems to have been determined by his desire to have a day other than the Jewish Sabbath and the Christian Sunday, though tradition has it that Friday was chosen because on that day the prophet fled from Mecca to Medina. He himself conducted the Friday services at Medina and after his death the caliph or governor officiated. There is no priesthood in Islam. An *imam,* or leader, reads the scriptures, offers prayers and preaches the sermon, these being the constituent elements of worship in the mosques.

Conspicuous in the ethical teaching of Islam is abstinence from intoxicating liquor and the practice of humaneness toward animals. Drunkenness is the vice most to be feared in tropical

[18] Suras 22, line 27; 2, lines 119, foll.

countries and Mohammed's opposition to Christianity was based, in part, upon its failure to put an absolute veto on the use of intoxicants, the New Testament furnishing abundant warrant for indulgence. Ex-president Eliot of Harvard University took the ground, in a recent address, that Mohammedanism is a better religion than traditional Christianity for the African tribes because of the stress which Islam puts upon total abstinence. General Lew Wallace, for twenty years a resident of Constantinople, declared that while Christian drunkards were to be seen in the streets every day, he never once saw an intoxicated Mohammedan. A "society for the prevention of cruelty to animals" is unknown in Moslem countries except in cities overrun with Christians. In Turkish cemeteries the four corners of the slabs that cover graves are grooved to catch the rainfall so that the birds may drink and sing over the places where their human brethren sleep. The fact that not all Moslems live up to the requirements of the faith is no reflection upon it any more than Christian failure to practice the precepts of the Sermon on the Mount warrants adverse criticism of Christianity. The ideals of a religion are ever ahead of the practice of its representatives.

Beware of echoing the popular notion that Mohammedanism advocates polygamy and slavery. The truth is that these evils existed for centuries in Arabia prior to the appearance of Mohammed so that the most he could hope to accomplish was a modification (not abolition) of these practices. No one can read the Koran without being impressed by the repeated inculcation of kindliness toward slaves and the promise of reward in paradise for every slaveholder who practiced the virtue of emancipation. Surely we to-day, only half a century removed from the "Emancipation Proclamation," will not dare to reproach Mohammed for having failed to *abolish* slavery. And how should Mohammed abolish polygamy, entrenched as it was in the life of his people from time immemorial? The very most that could be reasonably expected of him, the most he could hope to achieve, if reform were not utterly to fail, was a reduction to four in the number of wives a man might take unto himself and the prescription of monogamy for all who could not properly provide for more than one wife. Similarly, in the matter of divorce, abolition was out of the question; the most that could then be accomplished was to make divorce more difficult. And this Moham-

med did by conditioning the right to divorce upon four months' support of the wife after separation had taken place and the producing of four witnesses to substantiate a charge of adultery, the punishment of a hundred stripes and imprisonment to be imposed upon him who failed to prove the charge.[19]

Obedience is the cardinal virtue of childhood and in making Islam the central doctrine of his religion Mohammed preached a gospel exactly suited to the needs of his people; they were in the childhood stage of development in which submission to rules and the ruler is the highest virtue.

By lifting to a higher moral and religious plane the communities of his day and place; by welding into a harmonious religious unity the conflicting creeds of Arabia, Mohammed achieved that which neither the Judaism nor the Christianity of Medieval Arabia could accomplish. Nay, more, in the successful fulfillment of his civilizing work and in the realization of his supreme religious aim, Mohammed rendered invaluable service, not only to Arabia, but to all the world.

[19] Suras 2. 4. 24. 65.

SELECTIONS FROM MODERN SCRIPTURES

(Introductory to Chapter VI)

Any gospel adequate to meet the issues of a new age must be born to meet those issues; the very characteristics which fitted primitive Christianity to answer supremely the needs of the old dying Græco-Roman world, unfit the same form of teaching to meet *alone* the conditions of our young and different civilization.

No particular type of teaching can be equally adapted to all epochs. If it were, it would be so generic and indefinite as to be of little value.

The first condition of an adequate facing of the new issues consists in the recognition of the untried character of the problems with which we must deal.—E. H. Griggs.

For the man whose ideals are ahead of his practice there is always hope, even though those ideals be low; but for the man who has sunk his ideals to the level of his practice there is no hope, even though that practice be high.—A. T. Hadley.

The truly religious man is he who inwardly dedicates himself and outwardly devotes himself to knowledge of all truth he can learn in order to do what is right and be what is good.

Living upward, toward truth of thought, which is knowledge; toward truth of feeling, which in its highest form is love; toward truth of conduct, which is

virtue,—the fulfillment of duty—this is the essence of religion.—F. E. Abbot.

Under the influence of Christian teaching, approximation to ethical perfection was set up as the supreme end of human existence. But the image of perfection was looked for in the past, not in the future. Thus progress came to mean retrogression. But the spell that rested upon the ancient world is now broken. Men's faces are no longer turned backward toward the past in order there to behold the vision of the Golden Age. They look ahead to a golden life which they themselves are to usher in. But it behooves them to remember that the moral end cannot be successfully pursued when regarded as a by-product in the pursuit of other ends, or when placed on a level with them. A thorough going improvement in the behavior of individuals, classes and nations can be hoped for only if the moral end be exalted as the supreme end to which all others must be subordinated.—Felix Adler.

CHAPTER VI

THE WORLD'S GREAT RELIGIONS AND THE RELIGION OF THE FUTURE

Akbar, the great Mogul emperor of India, in the sixteenth century, convened at his court Hindus, Parsees, Moslems, Jews, Christians, representatives of the various ethnic religions, for free discussion of their respective systems of faith. Out of this ferment of hospitality was produced that remarkable work known as the *Dabistan,* a report of the confession of faith of each of these representatives. The spirit that pervaded this famous convention was beautifully expressed by one of the participants in the following catholic and fraternal utterance: "If thou art a Mussulman, go stay with the Franks, if thou art a Shiite, go mix with the Schismatics; if thou art a Jew, fellowship with Christians; whatever be thy religion associate with men who think differently from thee. If thou canst mix with them freely and art not angered at hearing their discourse, thou

hast attained peace and art a master of creation."

The same spiritual impulse that moved Akbar to hear at first hand the message of other faiths than his own moved the originators of the World's Parliament of Religions at Chicago in 1893 and the creators of many a minor such parliament since. The self-same impulse, it may be said, has prompted this course of lectures on the world's great religions.[1] We have gone, like pilgrims, with the scrip of sympathy and the staff of sincerity, to the shrines of sacred scripture that shrive the messages of the world's great faiths. What have our pilgrimages done for us? What have we learned from direct contact with these original sources?

Let me summarize the more important results of our inquiry: (1) All of the great religions face toward a particular ideal, a mental picture of what it is supremely desirable that man should be. (2) All ask the same fundamental vital question, what is the chief end of man? and the differing answers express the distinctive note in each religion. (3) All inculcate the

[1] The course in its entirety included the three great Aryan religions (Hinduism, Buddhism and Zoroastrianism), the chief of the *Turanian* religions (Confucianism) and the great Semitic religions.

same general moral precepts and religious sentiments. None has a monopoly of moral or religious truth, rather are they like different languages in which one spirit of humanity is expressed. (4) All are *one* because rooted in universal human nature, i. e., they are expressions of man's effort to perfect himself in all his relations and such effort is the essence of religion. (5) All are *different* because of their various local origins and the special claims made by each but shared by no other. In other words, each of the great religions has a *universal* and a *special* element, indicative of oneness and of difference, respectively. For instance, Mohammedanism is a *religion* because of its universal element, its idealward effort and the features it shares with all the rest. It is the *Mohammedan* religion because of its special element, its central claim that Mohammed is the prophet of Allah and the Koran his supreme revelation. Similarly Christianity is a *religion* because of the same universal elements inherent in it as in Mohammedanism and all the other religions; it is the *Christian* religion because of its cardinal claim that Jesus differed from all other human beings in *kind* as well as in degree and that he is the sole Savior of mankind, the perfect and complete

pattern for all men for all time. Such in brief are the main general conclusions to which our study has brought us.

Coming now to the subject of this closing lecture, the world's great religions and the religion of the future, let me at once remove the false expectation that some persons may entertain. Nothing could be further from my purpose than to forecast the content of the religion of the future. To attempt any such prediction would be presumptuous, profitless, thankless. There are those, and among them ex-President Eliot of Harvard University, who have ventured upon that attempt and we all know with what result.

But it may profit us and be in no degree presumptuous to consider the religion of the future in relation to the great religious systems of the world. Therefore, I took the precaution to entitle this address the world's great religions and the religion of the future, implying that the latter would be dealt with *in relation to the former.*

Will any one of the seven extant great religions be the religion of the future? Let me answer in the words of the celebrated Vivekananda: "If anybody hopes that any one of the great religions will triumph over all the others and become the universal religion, to him I say,

brother, yours is an impossible hope. If anybody dreams of the survival of any religion and the destruction of all the rest, I pity him from the bottom of my heart." Yet at the very Parliament of Religions where these noble words were spoken there was witnessed the spectacle of representatives of each of the seven great religions claiming that his is the universal religion, destined to win the world to its side. The fervent Buddhist pictured the universal sway of Gotama's gospel. The enthusiastic Mohammedan made a corresponding claim for the certain victory of Islam over all its rivals. The Zoroastrian, the Confucian, the Jew, each in turn, sketched his own religion in terms of universal religion. The devout Christian prayed for "the redemption of all the world through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." Obviously the putting forth of such mutually contradictory claims makes them all alike ridiculous and absurd and constitutes the first reason why none of them can ever triumph over all the rest. Certain it is that all those forms of religion which cling to narrow conceptions of their own sufficiency, finality and infallibility will die. One may venture to go even further and say that we who are now living may see the dawn of the

day of the coming religion which will be neither Hinduism, nor Buddhism, nor Judaism nor Christianity, but a new type of religion in the presence of which the extant religions will die a sectarian death and continue to live only in spiritual substance. It is, moreover, conceivable, though hardly likely, that he to whom the Hindu name, or the Christian name, or any other of the great names, is dear, may still retain it, but then such a name, however sacred the associations it connotes, will cease to constitute an assumed condition of salvation or a barrier to a wider fellowship in spirit.

A second and deeper consideration which warrants the belief that the religion of the future cannot be any one of the seven is that all alike are based on the principle of *authority.* All alike appeal to a recognized founder, or leader, accredited with the words of eternal life. All alike point to an alleged "revelation" as the fountain source and pattern of faith and practice, valid for all time. But the religion of the future will be based on the principle of *freedom.* It will appeal to no one founder or leader as having spoken the *final* word on any moral or religious subject, or as embodying in himself the perfect and complete exemplar for mankind,

because no one Master can ever include within his own personality the totality of perfections possible to all persons, for that would involve opposite qualities like those that differentiate the sexes. It will point to no one Bible or Sacred Book as containing the *totality* of moral and religious truth. It will turn to enlightened reason and to moral experience rather than to revelation, on the ground that never yet has a complete and final code of ethics or a permanently satisfying spiritual breviary been compiled. Nor are the signs of this change of base far to seek. What means the widespread practice of amending creeds, of compromising with recognized truth in statements of belief and confessions of faith, of reinterpreting scripture texts to make them teach other than what was originally intended? What do all these deplorable processes mean but inevitable abdication of the principle of authority and the coming coronation of free reason and experience as the only lawful regents of the religious realm.

The religion of the future will gratefully acknowledge and turn to practical account the contributions made by each of the great religions toward advancement of the moral life, but at the same time confess that none has given it *all*

the light we need, that none has transmitted the moral code in all its completeness. For, with the rise of new conditions in the progress of civilization, new problems appear for the solution of which we need more help than has been furnished by any of the historic systems of faith. The religion of the future will deem it treason to the infinite moral ideal to bend the knee to any one Prophet or to bind the reason to any one Book exclusively. To all the sacred scriptures, of the present as of the past, will the religion of the future bid men turn, defining as "inspired" that which inspires and to every moral religious Teacher will it bid men bow, without becoming the disciple of any one of them alone. Just here the question may be asked, must not an exception be made of Christianity? A writer in the *Methodist Review* for May, 1921, discussing the relative merits of the world's religions answers unreservedly in the affirmative. "The further I proceed in these studies the more deeply is the impression borne in that the Christian religion alone has reached the goal. No wonder our religion is called Christianity. . . . We have found God in Christ, the followers of other faiths, through no fault of their own, have never had the privilege of this experience."

For this writer, as for Eucken and many another, Christianity is thought to have an inherent expansiveness making it forever synonymous with the best thought and conduct of every age. Yet this is precisely what progressive non-Christians claim for their respective religions. Every one familiar with the perfervid efforts that are being made by Mohammedans, Buddhists and Hindus, as well as progressives in the other religions, knows that they are seeking to square their system with the highest ethical and religious thinking of the day, even as are these progressive Christians. But none of them sees what is obvious to every nonsectarian impartial observer, viz., that there is a limit beyond which progress cannot go without loss of identity of the religion itself. The notion that any one of the historic religions can preserve its identity and yet progress indefinitely is as illusory as the motion of the landscape to the traveler on the express train. Each of these religions is *by nature* stationary and loses its central, cardinal characteristic the moment it is made to appear capable of endless adaptation to the progress of man's thought. Neither Christianity nor any other of the historic religions can be made synonymous with the best ethical

and religious thinking of the age without the instant surrender of the doctrine that distinguishes it from all the rest. This is our answer to the expectation expressed by Professor Toy that "Christianity, though obliged to modify its present form, would adapt itself in time to the world's moral and religious needs, having the whole world for its heritage." By "standing close to the world's highest thought" he believed Christianity "would throw off from time to time whatever in it is opposed to the purest ethico-religious conceptions and retain only that which the best thought of the time demands."[2] But can it then be any longer *Christianity* when it becomes thus stripped of what is central to its ethico-religious system? Once abandon belief in the absolute uniqueness of Jesus and in his teaching as *all-sufficing* for all time and for all lands—and on this twofold belief all Christians are agreed—and the occasion for any such adaptation as Professor Toy anticipated disappears. It has ever been a cardinal point of agreement among all Catholics and Protestants that the teachings of Jesus in the Gospels of the New Testament furnish a complete, perfect and final revelation on the conduct of life. Zangwill, in

[2] Toy, *Judaism and Christianity*, "Introduction," p. 48.

his play, "The Next Religion," makes the physician say to the rector: "Is not Christ's religion the next religion; what have we found more beautiful and uplifting than the teaching of Jesus?" True, indeed; beautiful and uplifting to a degree are the teachings of Jesus and more especially those which he contributed to the Judaism of the Old Testament and Apocrypha, yet are his teachings as *in*sufficient for our needs to-day as were those of ancient Judaism for the needs of his day. Just as Jesus was driven beyond the ethics of the so-called Mosaic law, so modern ethical thought has been driven beyond the ethics of Jesus. Pray do not misunderstand this remark. I will be second to no one in my admiration and reverence for the person and teaching of Jesus, but I cannot be blind to the fact that his teaching did not cover and could not have covered the whole of the moral life, personal, social, international. Excellent and of imperishable worth as are the general maxims of the Gospels, such as "love one another," "return good for evil," "judge not that ye be not judged," "be ye perfect," these do not suffice when we are face to face with the perplexing moral problems of the modern world. For instance, the right relation of em-

ployer and employees is a distinctly modern problem. It was unknown to Moses or to Jesus, having originated about 1760 when the old domestic system of production gave way to the factory system, when machinery took the place of tools, when the long-established, close, personal relation between master and men was broken and the "wage-system" was introduced into industry. How shall the lost relationship be restored and a just return for their respective labor be secured to both employer and employee? Here the general maxims enunciated by Jesus cannot help us. We need more light than he has given, and from moral experience in the field of industry, it will more and more come.

"Give to him that asks of thee," said Jesus. But, in attempting to solve the charity problem, obedience to this maxim has wrought incalculable harm, necessitating the formation of scientific charity organizations having for part of their function to decide *what* we shall give, *when,* and *to whom* we shall give. Be just, compassionate, forgiving, was the plea of Jesus, and we need to heed it now as much as ever, but the question remains, what do justice, compassion, forgiveness in particular cases require? What formula can we employ to aid us in fulfilling

the precept rightly as occasion shall require? Between knowing what is right and doing what is right there lies *love* of the right and the *will* to do it. But on neither of these elements in the moral education of children have we as yet all the light we need. Or, consider the moral functioning of the State in dealing with mergers and trusts, an economic problem yet bristling with moral implication, and by no means solved, despite the help that accrues from the ethical message of Jesus. Then, again, there is the pressing problem of the present hour, touching the content of justice as applied to nation and nation, contrasted with the simpler concept of justice as between man and man. On this, too, we are sorely in need of more light than any of the historic guides have given us, not excepting Jesus. For the ethics of Jesus was essentially individualistic, intended to serve the immediate moral needs of individual souls, confronted with the mighty expectation of a kingdom of heaven on earth, membership in which was conditioned by moral worthiness. Jesus came expressly to do the work of preparing men and women for entrance into the new order of society so soon to take the place of the then existing order.[3]

[3] See pp. 118-123, for a full discussion of this point.

Consequently he confined himself to the ethics of personal life and this explains his silence on civics, on the state and on international morality, so desperately needed in 1914. Mark you, but for this limitation in the scope of his teaching, Jesus could not have done his special work. He owed as much to what he lacked as to what he gave, and this is equally true of every other great teacher with a live message. The religion of the future, then, while gratefully acknowledging the inspiration derived from the gospel of Jesus will seek to supplement it, even as he supplemented the gospel of Moses and the Prophets. It will hold, as he held, that moral truth is progressive. It will bid its devotees dare to advance upon the message of Jesus as he dared to advance upon that of his predecessors. It will point to a Righteousness beyond the righteousness we now know—a "veiled divinity," as Professor Adler has called it; the hem of whose garment we have not touched, "the plenitude of whose being has never yet been fully revealed, the radiance of whose glory has never yet been uncloaked, a Righteousness of which our righteous acts are but feeble rays; the Righteousness that shineth *more and more* unto the perfect day," because the perfect day is never reached,

but only endlessly approximated. Truly do we pursue a fleeing goal. The ideal flies ever before us and is often most passionately pursued when it seems furthest away. Far from pretending to have compassed the moral ideal, the religion of the future will differ from the Hebrew and the Christian religion in knowing that it has not yet been fully grasped, but is to be sought after eternally.

A third reason why none of the great religions can be the religion of the future is seen in the fact that the fellowship of each is exclusive, i.e., each of them, either explicitly or tacitly, shuts out all who disown its Master or its Book. To enter the *Mohammedan* fold one must accept Mohammed and the Koran as the standard of faith and conduct. But this test excludes all but two and a half millions of the people of the earth. To enter the *Christian* communion one must accept Jesus as the sole Savior of mankind, or at least acknowledge him as an all-sufficing guide in the moral life. But this test shuts out two-thirds of the human race. Islam presents its infallible Mohammed, Buddhism its deified Gotama, Parsism its inspired Zoroaster, Christianity its God-man Jesus. The fellowship of none is cosmopolitan and free. Mohammedanism

seeks to unite men in the bonds of *Mohammedan* love; it does not seek to unite Mohammedans, Jews, Christians, Hindus and the rest in the bonds of *human* love. Christianity admits to its fellowship all Christians on equal terms, and all non-Christians on no terms. But the religion of the future will refuse to break the bond of brotherhood by imposing any such authoritative requirements. Its fellowship will be cosmopolitan, not provincial; universal, not sectarian. It will refuse to require assent to any doctrinal beliefs, realizing that free, untrammeled thought has led some men into atheism, others into agnosticism, and still others into theism. Therefore, the religion of the future will offer terms of fellowship that can include all varieties of religious thought, uniting them on the only basis upon which men of divergent views can be united, viz., devotion to truth and the moral life, let their theology be what it may. Neither acceptance nor denial of any theological, philosophical, or sociological opinion shall preclude one from membership. It is not enough for men and women to be brothers and sisters in Christ, or in Moses, or in Buddha; we must be brothers and sisters in *Humanity* with all the rest of mankind. What a gratuitous insult it

would be to ask ex-Minister Wu, the Confucian, or Dharmapala, the Buddhist, or Paramananda the Hindu, or Rabbi De Sola, the Jew, to "accept the religion of Jesus." The religion of the future will make no such presumptuous demand, but instead would ask these non-Christians to accept the religion of universal Man, the religion which pays due homage to Confucius, the Buddha, Krishna, Moses, as to every other great Teacher, according to the truth he has to teach and the inspiration that may be derived from the record of his life. To put the matter a little differently, the religion of the future will welcome all who would live upward; "upward toward truth of thought, which is knowledge; upward toward truth of feeling, which in its highest form is love; upward toward truth of conduct, which is virtue, the fulfillment of duty." Religion can unite only those who would live upward. It must separate them from all who would live the downward life of irreligion. From this basic antagonism between religion and irreligion, between a religious fellowship grounded in and governed by a common desire and effort to realize the ideal life and the irreligious anarchy of those who agree only in a common aversion or indifference to the ideal life, there can be no

escape. For they who believe in living upward necessarily exclude those who prefer to live downward, as truth excludes error. To be sure we all are simply human beings, the best of us are not all good, nor the worst of us all bad. But we all are either religious or irreligious beings. What makes us religious beings is the desire and effort to live the upward life. That *unites* us in a religious fellowship and *separates* us, inevitably, from all who are without that desire and effort. The religion of the future will steer clear of the vain hope entertained by certain religious societies of our time, notably by the "Community Churches," which seek to unite in one fellowship all the people of a community "on the basis of mere citizenship." For morality excludes immorality by an irreconcilable antagonism and only weak and confused minds will flinch from admitting the fact. The religion of the future will distinguish things that differ and not swamp all sense and sanity by a refusal to recognize essential differences. And while it cannot hope to unite *all* men in *one* fellowship, it can hope, and ever more must hope, to rouse indifferentists to warm interest in the ideal life, to redeem the deliberately immoral and win them over to morality; to rescue

those who have chosen to live downward and so include them, at last, in its fellowship. Remembering that in the best of us is something bad and in the worst of us is something good; remembering that the most immoral man is not always immoral, but has his better moments in which he looks down with shame and horror on his life, the religion of the future will maintain its hope and strive to help those who would live downward rise and enter the fellowship of imperfect people whose pole star is the perfect.

A fourth reason why none of the existing great religions can triumph over all the rest is that all alike are encumbered with superstitious beliefs which an age that is rational, scientific, forward looking and humanitarian cannot tolerate and of which progressive spirits in each group would fain have it rid. Hence the plea of certain Vedantists for a purifying of the degraded forms into which Hinduism has sunk; the plea of Dharmapala for a purging of the Buddhism in vogue among the great majority of Buddhists, stripping it of the gross superstitions with which it has become encrusted; the plea of a prominent representative of one of the Christian sects for the relegation

of the "Apostles' Creed" to the back of the *Prayer Book,* and the removal from the ritual of elements utterly at variance with modern educated thought. The religion of the future will guard against the danger of such encumbrances, (1) by aligning itself with the assured results of scientific research, so far as these may concern religious beliefs and practices; (2) by committing itself to the method of freedom as opposed to the method of authority, acknowledging no absolute finalities of thought; (3) by providing for modification of views as may be required by the discovery of new facts or of new light on old facts, all the while remembering that infallibility is not for fallible man, that a finite being living in an infinite universe can never speak the last word on any subject.

Will the religion of the future be a mosaic, made up of the best in each of the seven great religions, an eclectic synthesis of the collective excellences of Brahmanism, Buddhism, Confucianism and the rest? No, not by any such mechanical process will the religion of the future be formed, but rather by a process of slow, gradual, organic growth. Like the tree, that draws from the surrounding earth, air and

water, the materials wherewith to build the strength of its trunk and the beauty of its foliage, so the religion of the future will, in its formative process, draw upon all religious resources available to give its gospel strength, beauty and inspiration.

Will the Ethical Culture Movement prove to be the religion of the future? Assuredly not by that name will it be known, seeing that its leading representatives have long been dissatisfied with the name, conscious of its exceeding inadequacy to cover all that deeper understanding of the movement reveals. Well enough to have given it in 1876 the name by which it is still known, for then the Jewish synagogues and Christian Churches among which it arose were encrusted with dogmatism and ceremonialism, woefully deficient in vital and vitalizing religion. Over against these conventionalized, stereotyped, conservative institutions there stood the extreme radicals with their crude, crass materialism, trying to interpret human life in terms of matter and force and caring nothing whatever about religion. Obviously for people dissatisfied with the synagogues and the churches and seeking a satisfying religion, affiliation with these radicals was no more possible

than with the dogmatists. Consequently no alternative remained for these dissatisfied souls, who *did* care for religion, who had a deep desire to come into vital relation with something supremely holy, to relate their finite selves with what is infinite, no alternative remained for them but to organize an independent, nonsectarian society, with emphasis in name and statement of purpose on the neglected, ethical aspect of religion. Hence the adoption of the name "Ethical Culture," now grown somewhat archaic and certain to be superseded by a more comprehensive and more fully descriptive substitute. Not only will the religion of the future not bear the name of Ethical Culture, but the Ethical Movement itself, as we now know it, cannot represent the coming religion. For the *common* concern of an ethical society is cultivation and development of the moral life. Ethical religion is the concern of a *group* whose desire is the cultivation of religion. The founder of the movement long ago declared that "one of the outstanding differences between a Church and an Ethical Society is that the latter is not committed to an ethical religion." He illustrated the point by reference to a country estate

with its pastures and orchards and its flower-garden. So in an Ethical Society there are various groups devoted to various interests. "There is varied pasture, there are orchards, and there is also a flower-garden, cultivated by a group whose preference lies in the direction of religion," a religion being defined as "an attempt to make of the world a spiritual home." The Ethical Movement, moreover, is a movement, not an attainment, not a finished product. Its founder never tires of stressing this distinguishing feature, the consciousness of a goal to be striven for, an ideal unrealized, a Righteousness beyond the righteousness that has found expression in moral codes. The Ethical movement had its spiritual origin in the sense of dissatisfaction with the Jewish Synagogues and Christian Churches as they were in 1876. It was inspired by the passion for a satisfying religion. From the start it was a search, a quest for the means whereby the world could be made a spiritual home, the historic attempts to make it such having failed to satisfy. As for the ethical religion which the founder of the movement has worked out, the elements of which are presented in his *magnum opus*, "An Ethical

Philosophy of Life," it should be remembered that this represents no one but the author. He speaks only for himself and his views are not to be construed as expressing what the Ethical Movement stands for. Professor Adler has offered an exchange, not a substitute, for the prevailing conception of God. It is "the spiritual universe, a republic of spirits, rather than a Monarchy; a spiritual organism composed of infinite organs; the Godhead an infinite host of beings, a vast community of spiritual life of which each human being is, *in his inmost self*, a citizen." Furthermore, the object of Professor Adler's worship is this "infinitesimal component of the infinite God," this "member of the spiritual universe," i. e., his fellow man; "not, indeed, his earthly self, not the clay form," but "the perfect Godhead in him," the veiled figure, veiled by the form of flesh and blood which is often the object of loathing. "This innermost, essential spiritual self, this infinitesimal component of the infinite God" as against "an imaginary figure floating somewhere above the clouds," is the object of Professor Adler's worship. He would not slight the uses of prayer, but in so far as it is "utterance" it is for him "silenced in the presence of the Unutterable."

"Any one who can pray," he says, "does not fully realize the ineffableness of the divine life." But prayer as "a way of putting before one the moral ideal is needed." Such prayer "makes us feel ashamed and stirs to moral effort." We need to "set before our eyes moral ideals, of goodness, of friendship, of parental and of filial relations, of national and of international life. They must be given classical expression, the distilled elixir of much thought and deep feeling and so be fitted to serve our spiritual need far better than vague exclamations addressed to an imaginary, floating image such as All Good, All Knowing, All Righteous." Instead of "addressing a God beyond the sky," the new rule of prayer would be to respond to "the call of the Godhead in your neighbor," eliciting the latent best in him, and thereby in yourself. And when, at death, this object of worship seems to have gone, consolation is to be found by realizing that it is "only the clay form that has gone," the earthly self, into which "a stellar ray descended." The earthly form "crumbles into a little heap of dust, but the star remains, one in the endless constellation of the spiritual universe." We have not lost our mate, for "the invincible self is unbegotten and imperishable

and that which is best in us is inseparably united to that which is best in him."[4]

Such, in bare outline, are the ideas of God, worship, prayer, consolation, which enter into the ethical religion of Professor Adler. But they have not become and may never become part of the common belief of all members of the Ethical Movement. Never can they become part of a creed of the Ethical Movement for it has no creed, is fundamentally opposed to the formation and establishment of a creed, desiring ever to keep religion from becoming petrified and the Movement from becoming stagnant and succeeding in this desire to the degree that it continues to be a Movement, not an attainment, leaving to the group that cultivates religion (as to every other group) the privilege and opportunity freely to take whatever position it will, provided it refrain from committing the Movement thereto.

The most, therefore, that can be claimed for the Ethical Movement in relation to the religion of the future is that it may make contributions to it of first-rate importance. The *ethical prayers* that are gradually being crystallized,

[4] "Address before the Society for Ethical Culture of New York," December 17, 1916.

even as were the great Christian prayers of Chrysostom in the course of three hundred years; the *ethical hymns* that will eventually be adopted by Societies that engage in congregational singing, the *ethical "responsive readings"* that will yet be prepared for use at Sunday assemblies—these may find a place occasionally in the "services" of the coming religion, which of necessity will emphasize the *ethical* note, even as do the Ethical Societies. Similarly, the contention of the Ethical Movement that the *moral* end must stand supreme over all other ends to be sought after, intellectual, scientific, æsthetic, material—will mark a contribution to the religion of the future. The world's religions have not stood for the supremacy of the *moral* end. Thus, for example, in the Greek religion morality is subordinated to an *æsthetic* end. Life was evaluated in terms of harmony, proportion, balance, beauty. Sin, said Plato, was to be avoided because it was ugly, because it did violence to our æsthetic sensibilities, "the good is the beautiful." In the Confucian religion morality is subordinated to *order,* is, indeed, one of the products of order. To reproduce the calm, unbroken, harmonious order of nature—this was

the ultimate end to which all others should be subservient, according to Confucius. Again, in Christianity, morality is subordinated to *faith,* a position conspicuously characteristic of the Fourth Gospel, the Pauline and Johannine Epistles. In Mammonism, with its cathedral dedicated to the Almighty Dollar, morality is subordinated to material prosperity. Even in Judaism, the most markedly ethical of the historical religions, morality is subordinated to the *Will of Yahweh,* whose personal authority supersedes it. He, by his fiat, was maker of right and wrong. "Thus saith the Lord" is the phrase with which lawgiver and prophet alike announce the moral law, the clear implication, throughout the Old Testament, being that Yahweh is the determiner of ethical relations and standards. His "word" creates moral obligation. Duty owes its origin, authority and meaning to His mandate.

In contradistinction to the religions of the past, the religion of the future will, like the Ethical Movement, maintain that to no ulterior end can morality be subordinated, that moral obligation is one of those necessary and universal relations called "the nature of things,

deeper than which no plummet can sink." Just as there is an absolute condition without conformity to which no square can be drawn, viz., that it be divided by its diagonal into two equal triangles, so there is an absolute condition without conformity to which no moral beings can exist in social relation, viz., mutual moral obligation. For the moment two moral beings enter into social relation mutual moral obligation obtains, *of necessity*. The two moral beings might never have existed, to be sure, in which case moral obligation would have had only potential existence, as the *predetermined law* of social relation for moral beings. The moment the relation became *objective,* the *necessity* of moral obligation was exemplified. In other words, it would be absurd to suppose two moral beings in social relation without being under mutual moral obligation. Nor, indeed, can the eternal relation of right and wrong be altered one jot or tittle. "Do this because I, Yahweh, say so." No, not even though thou be God that speakest. "Do this because it is right." Yea, though thou be the feeblest child that ever lisped. Prior to all else is the uncreated, unbegotten, eternal Right than which God himself

is not more ultimate and of which He can be but the faultless mirror and to which infinite and finite being alike must bow.

A further contribution of the Ethical Movement to the religion of the future appears in the attitude taken by the former to morality as independent of theology. But this is not to be construed as a confession of atheism, or even of agnosticism, but simply of *neutrality* toward every proposed *theological* basis for morality. Many members of Ethical Societies are theists, and it is their privilege as members of a free fellowship to hold whatever theological theory of ethics they choose, only they must not seek to make the membership as a whole sponsor for their individual convictions on the subject. It *may* be that the moral law derives, not from the Divine Will as such, but "from Divine Being, essence and constitution," as the lamented Francis E. Abbot so valiantly contended, basing his belief on "the scientific method as the only possible foundation for real religious knowledge." But neither Bergson nor Eucken, for example, would say amen to his basis. In other words, the alleged theistic basis of ethics is still an open question, one on which the consensus of all competent to pass judgment on the

issue has not yet been reached. By the notion of morality as independent of theology is meant that moral obligation as a necessary and universal condition of all personal relations has binding force regardless of any theological implications it may have. That is to say, the validity of the moral law is not contingent upon any theological sanction, because man finds in himself, as his most precious possession, that which both calls to duty and answers the call, holding him unconditionally to the Right and refusing to let him go unpunished if he disobey. Such is the absolute element in morality whatever the authorities may yet agree upon as to a theological ground for it. Furthermore, by this independence of morality is meant that the moral life at its best can be lived without the possession of any supernatural "grace," such as the Apostle Paul declared to be indispensable. Only as I exercise "faith," only as I "put on the Lord Jesus Christ," borrowing of his superabundant righteousness, can I supply my own lack and acquire the means of moral progress and salvation. Constitutionally, I am incapacitated for righteous living, some one else must give me the power. Contrast this view of Paul with the position taken by Jesus, viz., that

there are limitless potentialities for moral progress in all human beings, even in the lowest. With Jesus the religion of the future will take its stand, renouncing Paul's theological prerequisite for morality and his assumption of man's powerlessness to fulfill the law of righteousness except as by "faith" he acquire supernatural aid.

Nothing is clearer to the student of primitive culture than that theology and morality were distinct in origin. It is not true that "man first knew God and then from that knowledge divined his sense of justice and goodness and love." Man first knew, through experience, justice, goodness, love, and then, from out that experience, he fashioned the picture of a perfect embodiment of these qualities and called it God, investing it with ever finer attributes in proportion to his own moral growth. Man first knew an earthly father's love and thereupon conceived of a heavenly Father's love. Even today there exist tribes that illustrate this separateness of theology from morality. The Arafucas of the Southern Seas practice the brotherhood of man without ever having heard of the Fatherhood of God. "Though there were no God to punish and no Heaven to reward, virtue

would still be the binding law of life." So runs the noble apothegm from the ancient "Ramayana." The atheistic Russian revolutionists of the close of the nineteenth century shared that exalted view, sacrificing luxury, rank and life in allegiance to the moral ideal. In the fourth chapter of the first epistle of John we read, "He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" Could one ask for a more explicit admission of the independence of morality and theology? Both Confucianism and Buddhism arose as great *moral* reform movements, leaving theological problems severely alone. The founder of the former was confessedly agnostic, and the latter practically atheistic, leaving vacant the supreme place in the Hindu pantheon. For both, morality, independent of theology, was taken for granted.

Again, like the Ethical Movement, the religion of the future will make "moral experience, not revelation," the means for attaining the new moral light that is needed to solve the problems of the new day. From this it is not to be inferred that the religion of the future will reject or ignore the Bible, or any other alleged "revelation." On the contrary, it will give to

all of them a place among its sources of moral instruction and spiritual inspiration, regardless of the claim that is made for their non-human origin. Just as Brunelleschi, the famous Florentine architect, closed his specifications for the completing of the Duomo's dome with the injunction "the master-builders shall determine the next step to be taken when the dome shall have reached the height of 57 feet," for, he continued, *la pratica insegna che si ha da seguire*—"practice teaches what the next step to be taken shall be"—so in constructing the dome for the cathedral of the moral life, experience shall be the teacher, practice in moral architecture shall determine the principles and formulas to supplement those transmitted from the past, and which have been found inadequate to solve the moral problems created by conditions in the modern world. In this sense practice will precede theory, by "doing the will" one comes to "know the doctrine." By striving to get into right relations with others—in the family, in the factory, in marriage, in the state—we shall learn what these relations ought to be. By working toward an ideal of justice we shall learn what ideal justice is. Thus will the religion of the future take its stand on moral

experience as the key to the fuller light that needs to be shed on the path of the moral life.

In some of the historical religions, notably in Christianity, prime importance has been attached to creed rather than to deed. Here again the religion of the future will follow in the wake of the Ethical Movement and *reverse* the relationship, holding, with Jesus, that character is of supreme significance in the religious life. Enlarging upon his recognition of none other than an *ethical* test of fitness for membership in the kingdom of heaven on earth, the religion of the future will teach that the value of any creed consists above all else in the relation it bears to the moral life. It will plead for acceptance of doctrines on the ground that it promotes progress in the upper zones of our being, rather than because the doctrines are taught by a certain Teacher, or found in a certain Book. In other words, the final test of a doctrine's worth will be, not the Bible, but life; not revelation, but moral growth. The coming religion will hold that a man's moral worth is not dependent upon his theological beliefs, but rather that the value of those beliefs depends upon the degree to which they develop moral worth in him. The moral life has been likened to a mansion of

many locked chambers and the creeds of the great religions to a set of keys. The Christian, the Parsee, the Mohammedan, the Hindu, each comes with his creed-key, claiming that it and it alone can open the doors. The religion of the future will let the dispute over the keys go on because its greatest concern will be for the opening of the doors. While they are debating over the proper key—describing it, making extraordinary claims for it, securing converts to belief in its fitness for the locks—the religion of the future will fix attention on the problem of the closed doors because of its spiritual passion for getting into the unentered rooms of the moral life. Assuredly one of the chief reasons why religious unity within the pale of Christianity and of Mohammedanism still remains a dream is because the relative rank of creed and deed has not yet been completely reversed.

From all that has thus far been said it must be clear that the notion of "one religion for everybody," in the popular sense of the phrase, is a very shallow expectation and by no means to be confused with the nature and content of the religion of the future. For even in it there will be debatable points with gradual increase of agreement precisely as in the field of natural

science unanimity has been reached on many a disputed issue. Through the conflict of opinion among minds governed by respect for free, untrammeled inquiry, a body of accepted truth has been established among scientific men. And when theologians shall have risen to the plane of scientific men, theology, the science of religion, will take a place among the sciences which it has hitherto held only in theory. But no one need fear universal religious uniformity even then. For, no matter what measure of unanimity be reached, there will always be, in a growing world, a residuum, in theology as in physics, upon which agreement remains to be realized. It can scarcely be doubted that the trend in religion is toward a world unity, analogous to that which we see in the tree, or in the human body, or in any other organism—one tree with many branches, one body with many members, one organism with many organs and one subtile life-blood flowing through the whole, making each part kin with every other. But there are inexorable conditions upon which the attainment of such a world unity depends, and the religion of the future with its ideal terms of fellowship will insist on these prerequisites.

All the *Bibles* of the great religions, with

their respective superior and inferior contents, must stand on a basis of recognized equality as *human literature,* to be indorsed and adopted as free and enlightened reason and conscience prescribe.

All the *Masters* of the great religions, with their differences in character, insight, influence, and with no claim to intellectual or moral infallibility, must stand on a basis of recognized equality as *human leaders,* each to be revered and followed according to the truth he has to teach, and the helpfulness his biography affords.

All the *Organizations,* such as churches, synagogues, temples, with their respective differences, must stand on a basis of recognized equality as *human institutions,* to be judged and valued by the measure in which they satisfy human needs and the contributions they make to the religious progress of the world.

All the *Sects* must practice the humility they preach and each confess that its Bible is only a part and not the whole of religious truth; its Leader only one of the various lights of the world, only one out of many spiritual stars with which the sky of religion is studded, not the *only* "way, truth and life." Each of the Sects, again, must abandon its ambitious insubordina-

tion, must confess that it is only a *part* of Christianity, only a part and not the whole of true religion.

Christianity, no less than each of the other great religions, must frankly confess its complete subordination to the higher religious whole of which it is only a part and which exists only as a dream, an ideal awaiting realization.

The *ultimate* origin of all religions has been the same, viz., spiritual anguish of some sort and the effort to appease it. Buddhism, for example, originated in the anguish of Gautama over the inefficacy of the Brahmanic prescription to bring the desired "salvation from the round of rebirths." In Mohammedanism it was the anguish of the Arabian Prophet over the idolatries of his fellow countrymen, robbing them, as he thought, of spiritual health here and eternal happiness hereafter. In the case of Christianity it was, as we have seen, the anguish of Paul, a "Pharisee of the Pharisees," over his inability to fulfill the Law of Righteousness, and utterly wretched until at last he found healing balm in "faith," the mystical "putting on of the Lord Jesus Christ."

The religion of the future will be no exception to the rule. If we may judge from present-day

conditions and tendencies it, too, will originate from a species of anguish—a twofold anguish, if we mistake not—social and spiritual. Social, in that it will relate to the maladjustments of society, the wrong, distorted relations that obtain, for example, between parent and child, husband and wife, the various social classes, nation and nation. The supreme pain will be the pain of unideal relations and the supreme joy will be activity directed to righting these relations and bringing them ever more into at-one-ment with the ideal. Spiritual, also, will be the anguish in the sense that it relates to religious beliefs that once satisfied religious needs, but which can serve no longer because out of accord with the best thought of the day; beliefs for which no adequate substitutes have as yet been found. The traditional idea of God has gone and with it the traditional idea of prayer and of worship. For none of these are there now any *adequate* substitutes. Exchanges for them there are, but no substitute ideas, to stand in the place of those outgrown and do for us what they did in the way of satisfying deep-seated spiritual needs. For all who find themselves unable to find fellowship with one or another of the historical religions

and who can no longer accept the current teaching with regard to God and prayer and worship, there exists a genuine sense of loss, of spiritual suffering, and from this anguish, in part, the religion of the future will originate and seek to supply the lack of the established faiths. Just how it will fulfill this function, obviously no one can say.

Likewise, with regard to the prospect of human survival of death, a pronouncement of the religion of the future cannot be forecast. This much, however, is certain. The pronouncement will not, as in each of the world's great religions, be made dogmatically. Faith in a future life will not be set forth as a dogma, i. e., as an undebatable proposition, as an affirmation without valid evidence, as an assertion without ground to substantiate it. Recognizing the partial character of man's reason the religion of the future will refrain from stating its faith as a dogma. Rather will it recognize the possibility of not one human soul having sufficient value to the universe to warrant its perpetual preservation. Frankly will it admit that some altogether different solution of the mystery of the moral life than personal survival of death *may* lie hidden in "the universal plan." To be

sure, that religion will demand that the solution be both rational and ethical, while admitting that all souls here on this earth are stationed between two great ignorances. When we talk of origins we know not exactly whence we came. When we discuss destiny we know not exactly whither we go. What, then, remains between these two ignorances? The religion of the future will answer: the kind of behavior we adopt between them; we are obliged to choose between living like immortals and living like the day-fly.

The religion of the future will demand that faith be reconciled with all that the mind can apprehend of knowledge, or the heart experience of emotion. The saints of the coming day will be trained not so much upon the ascetic counsels of *The Imitation of Christ* or on *Thoughts,* which, like those of Pascal, base man's greatness on the consciousness of his "fall," as in the verse of the poet, theologian and philosopher who was placed by Raphael, with equal right, in the conclave of the doctors and on the slope of Parnassus, him in whom the ardor of study was one with the love of Beatrice, while both were made subservient to that spiritual zeal which lifts the soul from the abyss of Hell, up the steep terraces of Purgatory to

the spheres of Paradise, until at last it gazes upon the ineffable revelation which can be apprehended only by the eyes of faith. And to the soul thus pursuing the upward way the religion of the future will offer the calming, comforting conviction that we do not need to see the end, the goal of our journey, *if we are on the right road.* And in this most helpful truth is summed up the whole practical philosophy of life.